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FRED A. GEIER

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FRED A. GEIER

1866 - 1934

written by

James E. Schwartz, Ph.D.

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Fred A. Geier had a profound influence on social services in his community and the machine tool industry. He left a leadership legacy which continues to this day. He was part of and spawned a very special family. It was my feeling that it was important to document his achievements and those of his family.

The late Daniel J. Ransohoff, a Cincinnati historian and social service worker, recognized Fred A. Geier for his many accomplishments. Danny encouraged me to have these writings compiled.

I want to thank all those who contributed to the preparation of this history and they are listed in the Acknowledgements. Also, I want to thank James E. Schwartz for his arduous research and well-crafted writing.

James A. D. Geier

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CHAPTER I

GEIER ANCESTRY AND FRED A. GEIER'S YOUTH

FAMILY BACKGROUND

The story of Frederick A. Geier has its beginnings in Germany. The family name was originally spelled "Geyer." But the two spellings were frequently used interchangeably in Germany and later in 19th century Cincinnati. The derivation of the name comes from a bird, the Lammergeier (Gypaetus Barbatus).[1] Some ethnologists feel that the origin of the family name may be found at the village of "Gey", which lies between the ancient Roman-German cities of Cologne and Aachen in the Hurtgenwald (forest of the herder).

While this site, not distant from the Belgium border, is nearest to locations where the ancestors of Fred A. Geier are first identified, there have been other places advanced as the original home of the Geyers. In Saxony, near the Czechoslovakian border, there is a town named Geyer as well as the nearby village of Geyersdorf. Still others believe the name originates from the Alpine Allgau region of Germany on the Bavarian-Austrian border near the fabled castles Mad King Ludwig built outside of the town of Fussen.

Paul Esselborn Geier, who studied the family genealogy, traced his family back to the late 17th century. The earliest identified ancestor was Johann Just Geyer, the great grandfather of Friedrich Gottfried Geier, who brought his family from Germany to America. Johann Just Geyer was a miner, the work that was also pursued by his son and grandson.

Johann Just Geyer's place of birth is unknown, as is the name of his wife. It is known that he was buried at Kautenbach, a village in the Rhine Palatinate not far from the Mosel River town of Bernkastel-Kues, on 4 June 1765, at the age of 71 years and four months. He had been married 28 years when he died, but it is likely that he had survived the death of a previous wife.

For years the mercury mine where four generations of Geyers labored has been only a name, its location lost. In 1988 Fred A. Geier's great nephew, Philip O. Geier III, was studying in Germany on a Fulbright scholarship. He took advantage of his overseas studies to explore the Geier family roots. Using data compiled by Paul Esselborn Geier, Philip journeyed with a German companion throughout the Rinke Palatinate to towns of significance in the Geier family past: Fockelburg, Muhlbach, Weilerbach, and Bosenbach.

He particularly hoped to find the *Dreikoenigszug* mine which, unfortunately, was not marked on any map. The search for the lost mine proved frustrating. After making frequent inquiries of townsfolk, he finally encountered a shepherd who said to turn off the winding paved road above Muhlbach. They were uncertain about the shepherd's advise for the dirt road along a wooded hillside came to a dead end at a site consisting of only a few modest

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[1] No one can decide whether the Lammergeier is a bearded vulture or an eagle. It should not, however, be confused with the New World vultures. It is a handsome bird having a patch of long black bristles projecting downward from its chin; hence the name *barbatus*: Bearded Vulture. It is found in high mountainous areas, descending to plains and steppes only to forage. Spending much of its day on the wing, it can soar with a grace unequalled by any other large bird. The Lammergeier's present range is confined to the high steppes of Central Asia, the Himalayas, and the rugged mountains of Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, Spain, and eastern Africa. This peaceful bird, whose name translated from German means "lamb vulture," has been exterminated by man throughout its previous range in Alpine Europe. It has not bred in Bavaria since 1855, in the Swiss Alps since 1866, or in the Carpathian Mountains since the mid-1930s.

houses and a seemingly deserted bar. They thought it odd to find a tavern so deep in the forest.

They soon realized that the inn probably originated because of the nearby, though long abandoned, *Dreikoenigszug* mine. Reflecting on his experiences that April day, Philip Geier wrote:

> To our surprise the barkeep matron led us around and pointed to a deep depression in the earth and a stone marker, the entrance to the old mercury mine in which my great-great-great grandfather had died. Standing at the site, I speculated on the significance of this mining tragedy to the Geier family history and to the later founding of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company. Johann Georg Geyer had followed in the tradition of his father Johann David Geyer and his grandfather Johann Just Geyer as a miner. His untimely death, I concluded while standing at the mine shaft, convinced his son Friedrich Gottfried Geier, only six at the time of his father's death, to desert the family tradition of mining and instead become a wood turner. He thereby established a new family tradition, followed by his son Philip and successors, that evolved from shaping wood in Germany to shaping metal in the United States at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company.[2]

Johann Just Geyer had a son who was named Johann David Geyer, who worked as a miner in Fockelberg. He was married to Elizabeth Carolina Simon, the daughter of George Nichol Simon, who was also a miner. The marriage took place on 9 June 1771 at Kleinich in the Saarland. Birth and death dates have not been located for Johann David Geyer. It is recorded that his wife, Elizabeth, was born at Niederhusenbach and buried at Kleinich on 5 January 1775. Her age was 69 years and six months.

Beginning with the succeeding generation there are a few facts other than the vital statistics of birth, marriage and burial. Johann David Geyer had a son who was born on 8 December 1771 in Kleinich and christened Johann Georg Geyer. The son followed his father's and grandfather's occupation as a miner. It was while earning his livelihood as a mercury miner at the *Dreikoenigszug* (Three Kings' Procession) that he died presumably in a mining accident. His date of death was 13 August 1816.

Johann Georg Geyer was married to Carolina Louisa Catharina Lanz on 17 September 1803 at Neuenkirchen, located in the German state of the Saar, but at the time administered from the town of Kaiserslautern in the Rhine Palatinate. Carolina is believed to have been a midwife. She had been born at Kusel in the Saar during February 1784. Her place of death is recorded to be at Bosenbach on 12 May 1845. She was Johann Georg Geyer's second wife, as he had been listed as a widower at the time of their marriage.

Johann Georg Geyer's death at the *Dreikoenigszug* mine may well have caused some of his sons to seek out other lines of work. While son Karl Geier (1824-1894), the first family member known to emigrate to America circa 1849, worked as a miner in Germany, his older brother, Friedrich Gottfried Geier, is not known, ever to have been a miner, as he made his living in wood and horn lathing.

Friedrich Gottfried Geier, the great grandson of Johann Just Geyer, was born on 22 February 1810 in Bosenbach. He married Luise Rheinberger on 21 October 1834 at Neuenkirchen. Among their children was Philip Geier, the father of Fred A. Geier.

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[2] Philip Otto Geier III, letter to James E. Schwartz, 23 July 1994. Dr. Geier is president of the Armand Hammer United World College in Montezuma, New Mexico.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

It is not certain what spurred the Geiers to emigrate to the New World. Famine and hard times in Germany played a part in their decision, as did their hope for a better life abroad. Between 1849 and 1856, ten percent of the population of the Rhine Palatinate legally emigrated. It is thought that an equal percentage left without permission.

The Rhine Palatinate and adjacent Saarland where the Geiers lived were at an European crossroads and, indeed, a battlefield of Europe. In these lands roamed and ravaged the armies of Prussia, France, Sweden and Bavaria. From the devastating Thirty Years War (1618-1648) to the Napoleonic Era, these lands had known uprisings and invasions.

After the Congress of Vienna, the Rhine Palatinate (Rheinpfalz) was returned to the Kingdom of Bavaria, whose monarch lived in distant Munich in Southeast Germany. The Palatinate, which occupies the land on the left bank of the Rhine River, is an area filled with beautiful hills that are reminiscent in topography of eastern Kentucky. But it was also an area characterized by a relatively high density of population, especially when compared to the productivity of the land. Life for the inhabitants of the Rhine Palatinate was often a delicate balance between survival and starvation.

The balance was tipped toward starvation in the mid-1840s, when a mysterious blight struck the potato fields throughout Western Europe. Even though the spring and early-summer of 1845 were warm and dry, potatoes rotted in the fields and even those that were harvested became wet and blackened masses of vegetation. The blight brought hardship especially to Ireland and Germany, for in these lands potatoes were the staple crops of the peasants. Thousands of farmers in Germany and in Ireland faced the same decision: emigrate or perish. In the two years after July 1845, potato prices rose approximately 300 percent. Hunger riots occurred in a number of German cities. In 1848 there was again a terrible famine, and the village of Weilerbach took a loan to purchase emergency food supplies. While the Geiers were artisans, it is likely that they grew some of their own food, as did most inhabitants of small German villages. The dire economy of the German peasants would naturally depress the standard of living of tradesmen, merchants and mechanics.

THE REVOLUTION OF 1848-1849

The millions of emigrants from Ireland and Germany who came to America did not always come because of Old World hunger. There was also a flight for freedom. The Congress of Vienna had brought peace to the European continent after years of turmoil and war. But it was a conservative's peace, a peace for monarchs and nobles, that was partially grounded in the denial of rights for the common man.

The Revolution of 1848-1849 began in Paris in February 1848, when a crowd insisted upon a non-sanctioned celebration of George Washington's birthday. This revolt would grow into a demonstration against the autocratic authority and feudal privilege that were found throughout much of western Europe. In Austria-Hungary, Louis Kossuth led the Hungarian uprising, which gained a short-lived freedom for the Hungarians from Austrian rule. Although Kossuth's period in power was brief (it was ended by the force of the Czar's army that had been requested by the Austrian Kaiser), he remained a world-famous symbol of revolutionary nationalism. The revolution that began in France inspired popular uprisings throughout Italy, Germany and Central Europe. It captured the attention of both the Old and the New World. And, strangely, both the Geier family in Germany and the Rehfuss

family in Cincinnati would be witnesses to or become acquainted with some of the greatest actors on the world's revolutionary stage.[3]

In 1848 what is today referred to as Germany was, politically speaking, a melange of separate and independent states that ranged from tiny principalities to the powerful Kingdom of Prussia. Germany included such governing units as grand duchies, bishoprics and electorates. Following the successful French Revolution of 1848, the German National Parliament at its meetings at St. Paul's Church in Frankfurt urged the German people to demand a national constitution. As a consequence of these developments there were popular uprisings in several German states. The revolutionary fervor, however, was concentrated in the states along the Rhine. Eventually, the terrified sovereigns who reigned over Baden and the Bavarian Palatinate called upon Prussia's king to crush the uprisings.

Throughout Germany many basic rights were unknown. There was no right to associate and assemble nor was there freedom of speech or press. Many Germans also hungered for a united greater Germany in place of myriad lesser states.

In the spring and summer of 1849, 2,000 representatives from the Bavarian Palatinate assembled in the town of Kaiserslautern to renounce the Bavarian King and to establish a provisional government and a people's army. The short-lived uprising reached the nearby village of Weilerbach, when young Karl Schurz was sent there to arrest the Catholic priest who was reported to be keeping his parishioners from enlisting in the people's army. Schurz would later become America's most famous German-American politician, a U.S. Army general, Senator from Missouri, Minister to Spain and Secretary of the Interior.

Schurz, who had received an appointment as a lieutenant, led a band of 50 men to Weilerbach to make the arrest. His "troops" were poorly armed. Their weapons consisted of a dozen flintlocks, some spears and scythes. As the ragged band approached the village, the priest rang the church bell to summon the peasantry to protect him. Schurz drew his pistol, which happened to be unloaded, and told the priest to disperse the crowd. Then the priest accompanied Schurz to the nearby city of Kaiserslautern where he was briefly questioned before being released. Along the way Schurz told the priest that the gun had been unloaded and they were both said to have had a good laugh.

Fred A. Geier's father and paternal grandparents, Friedrich and Luise Geier, were probably witnesses to this important event in the life of Weilerbach. The village listed 1,450 inhabitants in 1850. Even though the Geier family was Protestant, they certainly would have been aware of the drama that was taking place in their midst that day.

Not all of Schurz's military adventures were so comic-opera like. He would achieve fame throughout Germany and in much of the Western world by his rescue of his former professor of art at Bonn from Spandau prison outside of Berlin. The professor, Johann Gottfried Kinkel, had been sentenced to life imprisonment in a fortress for his revolutionary activities. The King of Prussia, however, considered the sentence to be too lenient and had the sentence changed to life imprisonment in a "house of penal servitude." Kinkel was said to have had the soul of a poet and was considered to be one of the most significant of the German revolutionaries.

During the same period in Cincinnati, Pauline Rehfuss, who would later be the mother of Juliet Esselborn, counts among her first recollections her father coming home and exclaiming, "Think of it, the French have driven out their king! The country has been

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[3] Dr. Louis Rehfuss was a liberal who emigrated from Germany to Cincinnati circa 1835, when reactionary forces stifled revolutionary fervor. He was the maternal grandfather of Juliet Esselborn Geier, the second wife of Fred A. Geier.

declared a Republic." Her father, Louis Rehfuss, was a man of markedly liberal and democratic leanings, who had left Germany for America in the 1830s.

Sometime after the revolution of 1848-1849, both Kossuth and the German poet Kinkel came to America to try to obtain funds and support for further attempts to bring about freedom and democratization in their homelands. Kinkel came to Cincinnati on at least two occasions and, while in the Queen City, lived with the Rehfusses. His hosts converted their living room into a bedroom. On his second visit, he remained with the Rehfusses for a month, during which time Louis Kossuth was also speaking in Cincinnati. These two giants on the revolutionary scene met in the Rehfuss home, where many a spirited exchange was said to take place.

The highlight of the meeting between the two revolutionaries in Cincinnati was a torchlight parade for, using Pauline Rehfuss's words, "two martyrs for liberty." The speakers' platform was erected in front of the Rehfuss house. Although the revolutionaries enjoyed great popular support, they did not obtain the official governmental recognition and diplomatic support that would have enabled them to continue their struggles with some likelihood of success.

THE JOURNEY TO AMERICA

For reasons unknown, but unquestionably influenced by economic hard times, political turmoil and repression, Friedrich and Luise Rheinberger Geier decided to emigrate to America. Sailing with them were their three sons and two daughters. It is believed that they set sail from Le Havre, France, on 20 October 1851, for that is the date given by Jacob C. Geier (Fred A. Geier's uncle) when he joined *Der Deutsche Pionier* (The German Pioneer), a society for German-Americans who had resided in the Cincinnati area for at least 25 years. However, village records in Weilerbach curiously give a 1852 date as the year of emigration.

However dreary the prospects in the Old World and however bright the promise of the New World, emigration in the mid-19th century was not a matter to be taken lightly. It was still primarily a time of sail instead of steam and an average westward voyage across the Atlantic took about six weeks. Adverse conditions, the absence of winds or the prevalence of stormy seas, could extend the journey to 100 days. Louise Geier Tuechter, who was Fred A. Geier's aunt, noted that their sail from Le Havre to New Orleans took 70 days.

The horrors of sailing to America aboard an emigrant ship were legion. Among the complaints that made even a speedy voyage a passage of misery were: sea-sickness, tainted water, improper food, disorderly crews, cramped and poorly-ventilated quarters, and a total lack of hygiene. And, these were merely the complaints of the luckier voyagers. Maldwyn A. Jones writes that some emigrants had even greater trials to bear. "They crossed the Atlantic in the knowledge that disaster might at any moment strike in any one of three forms: fire, shipwreck or plague. Those grim possibilities materialized often enough to ensure that a proportion of those who set out hopefully for the promised land never lived to see it."[4] Little wonder, then, that when Fred A. Geier, during the 1890s, planned his first voyage to Europe, his mother wrote him a note on the eve of his journey expressing her anxiety. Undoubtedly, she was reliving her own voyage to America nearly a half-century earlier.

According to Jacob Geier, the family landed at New Orleans on 22 December, 1851. The ships sailing between France and Louisiana closest to that date was the *Belle Assize*, but the manifest does not disclose any "Geiers" or "Geyers" aboard. The family safely weathered

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[4] Maldwyn A. Jones, *Destination America*, p. 33.

the Atlantic Ocean but there would be new hazards in New Orleans. Each step of an emigrant's journey presented new problems.

LIFE IN NEW ORLEANS

Friedrich and Luise Geier and their five children first set foot in America at the thriving port of New Orleans. It was not by chance that the Crescent City was their gateway to America. In 1850 New Orleans, with a population of 116,375, was the fifth largest city in the United States. Only New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Boston were bigger. Of its inhabitants, 11,425 had been born in Germany. During the first five years of the 1850s, 126,000 German immigrants arrived at its port.

Then as now, New Orleans was a world port. Its anchorage was crowded with sailing ships and packets, steamships and schooners. Its wharves were piled high with bales of cotton and tobacco to be sent to Liverpool, Le Havre and Bremen. And on their return the sailing ships would carry a human cargo, the many Irish and German emigrants seeking a better life in America.

Before the Civil War, New Orleans was the gateway to the American West and this included the Ohio River Valley. One of the most active commercial centers in the New World, no city offered industrious immigrants a place to start their new life. Its plants and mills turned out agricultural equipment, iron, lumber, leather boots and shoes, candles and soap. New Orleans was also where Friedrich Geier's younger brother, Karl Geier (1824-1891), had emigrated in 1849. Surely Karl had written to his older brother about the promise of America. It was a time, too, of gold fever, as the Swiss-German Johann Sutter had just discovered gold in California. Karl had been a miner in Germany but in New Orleans he became a carpenter and his sons would become successful builders and contractors.

It is possible that the Friedrich Geier family originally intended to make New Orleans their permanent home. Friedrich Geier's oldest son, Jacob, found work as a carpenter in New Orleans immediately after landing. But it was quickly learned that the bustling Crescent City had its downside. It was reported that New Orleans was "one of the dirtiest and consequently one of the sickliest cities in the nation."[5] Bordered by swamps, lakes, and the Mississippi River, the city also lacked modern sanitary facilities. Open gutters carrying filth, and stagnant pools were hospitable breeding grounds for millions of mosquitoes. It was at the very peak of German immigration into New Orleans in the early-1850s that the city was in the midst of the darkest ten years in its medical history. In 1853-1855 alone there were well over 30,000 dead from cholera and yellow fever.

The scourge of yellow fever would prove to be the German immigrants' worst enemy. It struck unacclimated foreigners with particular virulence. At times entire families were wiped out or there would be only a solitary survivor left to grieve and to bury the dead. The victims were not concentrated among the old and feeble as one might imagine; many were comparatively young and aged between 20-40 years.

One of the yellow fever victims—but not a fatal one—was Friedrich and Luise's son, Philip. It was written that Philip Geier had his eye on a career with the church; he was dedicated to becoming a pastor, but the yellow fever so weakened his constitution that he reconsidered his vocational path. He decided to follow the wood-turning trade of his father and older brother. One biographical sketch implies that the Geier family arrived in Cincinnati on 16 March 1852. Certainly, the unhealthy climate influenced their decision to move

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[5] John Fredrick Neu, *The German People of New Orleans: 1850-1900*, p. 14.

elsewhere. They may have also desired to live where the number of Germans was greater than in Creole and Cajun New Orleans. The more hospitable climate of the Ohio Valley with its fertile lands and bustling factories beckoned. The Queen City of Cincinnati was where the Friedrich and Luise Geier family would put down roots.[6]

LIFE IN CINCINNATI

The first member of the Geier family believed to have come to Cincinnati was Friedrich and Luise's oldest son, Jacob F. Geier. Ordinarily one might imagine that his parents and siblings came north to Cincinnati at the same time. But there is some suggestion, at least, that the six other family members did not arrive until 1854, two years later than Jacob.

The first vital statistic on the Geier family that has been uncovered is for August 1854, when two children, August and Philippina, died within a day of each other. Perhaps they died of a disease that they contracted in New Orleans. Perhaps it was the same yellow fever that had so dehabilitated Philip Geier and caused him to abandon his dream of a clerical career.

The notion that Jacob Geier prepared the way for the rest of the family to come north might also be inferred from a newspaper article published in 1934 that focused on the life Fred A. Geier's aunt, Louise Geier Tuechter. The article read in part:

> Eighty-five years ago Mrs. Tuechter and her parents embarked for the United States. They made the trip by sailboat. It took 70 days. Eighty-three years ago Mrs. Tuechter's family was settled in Cincinnati.[7]

One thing that was certain was that Cincinnati had far more of a Germanic feel to it than had Latin New Orleans. In Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine, German signs and inscriptions could be seen everywhere: theatres and beer gardens, churches, shops and restaurants. For music there were German bands and for news there were German-language newspapers such as the *Cincinnati Freie Presse* and *Cincinnati Volksblatt.*

One visitor to Cincinnati during 1850, Fredrika Bremer, reported this about Cincinnati which was widely recognized as a center of German-American culture in America: "The Germans here live as in their old Germany. They are *gemuetlich*, drink beer, practice music, and still ponder *ueber die Weltgeschichte.*"[8]

The fact that Germans were the largest immigrant group to locate in Over-the-Rhine unsettled some native-born Cincinnatians who blamed the immigrants for every misfortune from epidemics to unemployment. In 1855 a nativist mob attempted to storm the Over-the-Rhine only to be repulsed by the well armed and highly trained German-American rifle clubs,

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[6] Friedrich Geier's younger brother Karl (Charles) and his wife, Elizabeth Haberman, had married in Germany before emigrating in 1849. They had five children: George, Margaret (Ahrends), Elizabeth (Steimle), Bertha (Kerner), and Charles G. P. Geier. They lived in New Orleans where Karl's two sons formed a partnership in 1906 under the firm name of Geier Brothers. In 1908 the Geier Brothers' Building and Manufacturing Company was organized and incorporated under Louisiana laws. George Geier was a 32nd degree Mason, a Mystic Shriner, and a member of St. Matthew's Evangelical Church. George's grandson, Louis Geier, was a member of St. Matthew's congregation in 1993.

[7] "Member of 83 Years' Standing is Last to Leave When Church Closes Doors," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 18 September 1934, p. 8.

[8] *Destination America*, p. 133.

militia units and *Turnvereine* (gymnastic clubs). For two days 500 German-Americans manned a barricade across Vine Street.

Juliet Esselborn Geier's mother, Pauline Rehfuss Esselborn, was a young girl in Cincinnati during those troubled years. Her father was active in political circles and important questions of the day were a matter of family interest and concern. Years later she recalled those turbulent times in antebellum Cincinnati:

> The political situation became constantly more difficult because of the question of slavery and also because of the increasing hatred of the immigrant, the "damned Dutch" as they were generally called. I remember my father scolding about the "natives" and the newly-formed party of the "know-nothings," the party that wanted to drive out the Germans. There were incidents in the city where there were many Germans. In Cincinnati the canal was considered the boundary line and a cannon was set up there for several days to prevent the hated Germans from entering the lower part of town. Then a company of militia was sent into the German quarters to drive out the Germans. But they had made ready: in the halls of the Turners and of the Free Men they had barricaded themselves and put the "natives" to flight.[9]

The political vicissitudes of the 1850s undoubtedly affected Friedrich and Luise Geier and their three surviving children. The most important family concern, however, was not politics, but the need to get established in business. Jacob Geier had begun working as a carpenter as soon as the family arrived in New Orleans in December 1851. Upon coming to Cincinnati the following March he became associated with Martin Adleta who ran a lathe shop on Walnut Street near Allison. He remained there for a half-year, then worked at several furniture factories for the next five years. Jacob Geier also worked for seven months in Hamilton, Ohio, where he was a foreman in a furniture factory.

The first family turning business in Cincinnati was established by 1858 when Jacob joined his father in setting up a shop at 178 Clay Street. That site, on what was then the corner of Clay and Liberty Streets, was east of today's Grammer's Restaurant. By 1859 the business had relocated to 91 Locke Street. Philip Geier worked alongside his father and older brother but it is not believed that he was a partner of theirs at this time.

Jacob Geier married Anna Amelia Graeff on 27 April 1856 at Zion German Evangelical Church. He and his family lived in quarters at the shop. Thus, it was doubly unfortunate that sometime circa 1861 there was a fire that destroyed the business and all of his personal belongings. For an short undetermined period afterward he set up shop on Third Street.

The business, too, was undergoing changes. In 1861 Friedrich Geier retired, leaving his oldest son, Jacob, as the sole proprietor. While Friedrich Geier may have formally relinquished or sold his part of the business, he continued to be listed as a turner for the remainder of his years. And in all likelihood he worked for his sons as needed.[10] Friedrich Geier died on 14 December 1877.

In 1863 the business was operating at the southeast corner of Sixth and Hoadley Streets. In 1865 Jacob and Philip, along with a third principal, Joseph Rennekamp, established a

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[9] "Recollections of Pauline Rehfuss Esselborn," pp. 5-6.

[10] There are seeming discrepancies about the history of the wood turning business. For example, Jacob F. Geier's biographical sketch that was published in *Cincinnati Sonst und Jetzt* (1878) says Friedrich Geier retired in 1861. But the 1863 Cincinnati City Directory list Friedrich, Jacob, and Philip Geier all working at "F. Geier and Sons."

furniture factory at 233 Clinton Street. The manufacture of bedsteads appears to have been their core business. After a year it appears that the business and the Geiers' association with Joseph Rennekamp had ended.

Jacob and Philip Geier then established a partnership and operated a large-scale lathe or turning business. The business was now located at 17 Laurel Street in the West End. The two brothers apparently prospered and worked together until 1871, when Jacob purchased his brother's interest and continued the operation at the Laurel Street site.[11] By 1872 Philip was in the wood-turning business on his own with a factory operating at 66 Oliver Street in the West End. He was actively engaged in the affairs of this enterprise until a year before his death in 1887.

During his early years in Cincinnati, Philip Geier, while closely associated with his brother and father, was also proceeding to establish his own identity in the New World. On 28 March 1859 he was granted United States citizenship by the Hamilton County Court of Common Pleas. Jacob Geier attested that his brother met residency requirements and was of good character.

A further significant step that Philip Geier took was to marry Sophia Louise Otten on 8 September 1861 in Cincinnati. Louise, as she was generally known, was born on 7 September 1842 in Bremen. Louise Otten's parents had moved to Bremen by 1839 from Riede, a nearby village to the south, in the Kingdom of Hanover.[12] It is known that the Otten family had lived in Riede for over 100 years, as Louise Otten's paternal great grandfather, Dietrich Otten, was born there on 26 September 1723.

When Louise's father, Otto Otten (1810-1897) was granted citizenship in the then Free City of Bremen on 6 March 1839 it was "ohne Handlungsfreiheit" which meant citizenship "without commercial freedom." Otto Otten's occupation at the time was recorded as a "Kutscher," the name for a coachman or drayman. It is likely that he handled horses and drove a wagon carrying beer barrels or other freight.[13]

Louise Otten emigrated from Bremen to America with her parents and three siblings in 1851. A decision dated 14 April 1851 and rendered by a Bremen senator permitted the Otten family to retain their citizenship in the free city for the five-year period during which they planned to live in Cincinnati. Otto Otten still had not gained "commercial freedom" in Bremen. This economic limitation may well have prompted the family to seek their livelihood in the New World.

In Cincinnati, Otto Otten became associated with his younger brother, Dietrich Otten, who was a manufacturer of cigars. Dietrich Otten pledged to pay the City of Bremen two

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[11] Curiously, the 1870 Census of Manufacturers lists two businesses operated by "Geier and Brother" in Cincinnati's 10th Ward which was in Over-the-Rhine instead of Cincinnati's West End. One might dismiss these census entries except for the fact that the product of one of the enterprises was common chairs and the other was cigar boxes. The Geier brothers were known to manufacture furniture, and Philip Geier's Otten and Tangeman relations were employed in the tobacco and cigar trades. The Geier brothers could well have been supplying these family members with cigar boxes.

[12] The Kingdom of Hanover was annexed by Prussia after the Seven Weeks' War in 1866 and remained a part of Prussia until 1945. The Kingdom of Hanover's former ruling family was also the royal house of Great Britain and Ireland from 1714 to 1837.

[13] The German free cities and states from the time of the Holy Roman Empire to the unification of Germany under Bismarck jealously guarded who could enter various trades and professions. The guilds had great powers and not everyone could become a merchant, banker, printer, etc.

dollars and six Groschen (a 10-penny piece) a year to enable the Otto Ottens to retain their citizenship in the German city. The specified payment was to continue for five years.[14]

Encouraged no doubt by reports from Cincinnati, other Otten family members would soon also begin journeys to America. The most complete documentation found for the various family members who emigrated from Germany relates to Otto Otten's brother Friedrich Otten (1825-1897). Friedrich Otten emigrated from Bremen during August 1854, and arrived in New York City during September 1854. He arrived in Cincinnati later that month.

Otto Otten and Luise Tangeman were married in Germany at St. Peter's Cathedral in Bremen on 28 April 1839. They would become the parents of four children, all of whom lived into the 20th century. The children were: Johann Friedrich Otten (1840-1900), Sophia Louise Otten (1842-1922), Johanne Elisabeth Otten (1845-1930), and Otto Otten, Jr. (1848-1949).[15]

Many of the early Ottens who came to Cincinnati, along with various Tangemans and Moormans to whom they were married, were engaged in the tobacco business. This enterprise may have first employed family members in Europe as Bremen received much tobacco that was shipped from New Orleans.

Louise Otten's brothers, John F. Otten and Otto Otten, Jr., as well as her parents, would live at times some miles upstream from Cincinnati in Ironton, Ohio. Louise's parents resided in Ironton from 1860-1864 and again from 1870-1878.

Perhaps because there were family ties to Ironton, it has been the belief among family members that Philip and Sophia Louise Otten married in Ironton. Hamilton County records, however, establish that the marriage took place in the Queen City and that the minister officiating was C. Steinhauer.

FAMILY LIFE IN CINCINNATI'S WEST END

It was said that Philip Geier liked children. That was a good thing, as ten children resulted from his marriage to Louise. The children were born, with one exception, every other year for a period of 18 years. They were: Anna Tangeman (1862-1932), Emma D. Cone (1864-1946), Frederick A. Geier (1866-1934), Matilda Mayer (1867-1893), Louise A. Geier (1869-1915), Margaret Walter (1871-1930), Otto P. Geier (1874-1954), Philip O. Geier (1876-1954), Walter H. Geier (1878-1960), and Norma E. Geier (1880-1967).

At the time of or shortly after Philip and Louise' marriage, they moved to 231 Hopkins Street in the West End. A section of that street may still be travelled as it now bounds the south side of Union Terminal. But nothing remains of the residential character of the neighborhood. By 1867 the growing family moved to the north side of Melancton between Jones and Cutter Streets. The house, number 78, would be the Geier home until 1879 or 1880, when they moved out of the Cincinnati flatlands to the west side of Ohio Avenue at Parker Street in southeastern Fairview. The Geiers had now climbed to the top of the hill.

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[14] The only two references uncovered for Dietrich Otten are in the 1843 and the 1853 Cincinnati *City Directories*. His fate is unknown.

[15] Johann Friedrich Otten was commonly referred to as J. F. Otten in Cincinnati. He was the timekeeper and an early director of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company. Johanne Elisabeth Otten seems to have always been called Betty and this reference exists even in early records in Bremen. She was married to William Ahlers who preceded her in death by approximately 35 years. Otto Otten Jr. was frequently accorded the title of "Doc" Otten but his trade was that of pharmacist.

Photograph of the Philip and Sophia Louise (Otten) Geier family c. 1882-1883. Pictured from the left are: Emma D., Anna, Sophia Louise, Norma Elizabeth, Matilda Elizabeth, Philip Otto, Margaret, Walter H., Otto Philip, Louise Auguste, Philip, and Frederick August.

Financially speaking they had certainly arrived by this time, as the hilltops to the north and east of Cincinnati's basin were considered to be the most desirable suburban neighborhoods.

However, one can not judge Cincinnati's West End in the 1860-1870s by what remains today. For the past century the area has been characterized by factories, overcrowded houses and huge tenements. By the time of the New Deal, the West End suffered from slums which would be razed for public housing. These projects themselves would soon become characterized as distressed and dangerous habitations. But much earlier, in 1841, Cincinnati historian Charles Cist noted that in addition to the homes of the wealthy, "many frame cottages surrounded by trees and shrubbery make this an attractive residence quarter for people of moderate means."[16]

Many of the wealthy lived on Dayton Street, often referred to as "Millionaires Row", in the northern part of the West End. Here were the highly ornamented homes of members of the Hauck, Windisch and Wetterer brewing families, who also had their breweries nearby. Andrew Hickenlooper, a Civil War brevet brigadier general and the chief of the Cincinnati Gas-Light and Coke Company, also lived on Dayton Street.

Other areas of the West End did not have such a concentration of wealth and were more ethnically and economically diverse. The West End was once the home of a great many Jews, who lived there before their exodus to the hilltop suburbs had run its course. As late as 1900, nine of Cincinnati's 11 Jewish congregations were located in the West End. There was a synagogue on the northeast corner of John Street and Melancton, within a block or two of the Geier home.

If the Haucks on Dayton Street lived within a block of their principal business, the same was true of Philip Geier and his shop. The wood-turning business was two blocks north of their home on Melancton. In this pre-automotive era many businessmen preferred to live close to their enterprises. And the West End was much more a business class neighborhood in its day than was the adjoining Over-the-Rhine area to the east.

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[16] Cited in Geoffrey J. Giglierano and Deborah A. Overmyer, *The Bicentennial Guide to Greater Cincinnati: A Portrait of Two Hundred Years* (Cincinnati: Cincinnati Historical Society, 1988), 102.

According to the 1870 census in the 18th Ward, home of the Philip Geier family, also could be found the residences of department store magnate William F. Doepke, jeweler Frank Herschede, and James Gamble of the prominent soap family. Various Geier relatives, e.g., the William Tuechters and Theodore Moormans, and future in-laws such as the Julius Esselborns and Albert Schwills, also lived at times in the 18th Ward. Both William and Louisa Geier Tuechter and Friedrich and Luise Geier lived on West Liberty, which was only one block north of the Philip Geier's home on Melancton.

That the Philip Geier family was favored with rising economic fortunes during the 1870s is revealed by August Tuechter's reminiscences. In a letter at the time of Fred A. Geier's 50th birthday, Tuechter wrote:

> I think of our boyhood days in the West End, when we were such close neighbors. I recall, that through the force of circumstances, I could not enjoy as many things as you did; but I recall with much pleasure your goodness even at that time and I remember such incidents as loaning me your velocipede, giving me my first pair of skates after you got a pair of Shirley's and occasionally permitting me to ride in the family vehicle, when you had it in your charge.[17]

Almost nothing is known about Fred A. Geier's youth. Along with his brothers and sisters, he was baptized and confirmed at Zion German Evangelical Church at 15th and Bremen (now Republic) in Over-the-Rhine. His confirmation occurred on Palm Sunday 1880, a traditional time for confirmation in this Protestant denomination. At some point he learned to play the violin. He inherited musical abilities from both the Geier and Otten lines and possessed a fine tenor voice. From early photographs we know that he was a slender, handsome youth.

It is thought that his early school years might have been at Zion Church, which ran a parochial school committed to perpetuating the use of the German language in America. His secondary schooling was at Woodward High School, a school that several of his siblings would also attend. Woodward, the oldest public school west of the Alleghenies, was located at the corner of Broadway and Woodward Streets in Over-the-Rhine. The school building was a three-story Gothic-style edifice. It had high standards for admission, advancement and matriculation. From its beginnings, Woodward High School was noted for its excellence in mathematics. Sciences and languages were also stressed in its classical curriculum. Given the thoroughness of the school's work with "figuring," it does not appear unusual that Geier and such schoolmates as C. Wood Walter, August Tuechter and George Merryweather would later be at ease in the world of finance and commerce.

There is a dearth of information about school life in the 1880s, when Fred A. Geier was a student. Historian Charles Frederic Goss wrote, "While Woodward was never regarded as a military school, the military spirit seems to have predominated from the earliest history of the school. The students, when not engaged in football and other favorite games, were

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[17] Letter from August F. Tuechter to Fred A. Geier, dated 23 June 1916 on the occasion of Geier's 50th birthday. Tuechter knew Fred A. Geier from childhood throughout his life. Thus, some of his references are somewhat obscure. Velocipede was an early name for a two-wheel (or three-wheel) pedal operated vehicle. This bicycle was also known as a "boneshaker." It was not the high-wheel bike, which was introduced circa 1870 and was called an "ordinary."

organized into companies of amateur soldiers and marched and counter-marched in the ample grounds of the school yard."[18]

Extra-curricular activities were the exception, however, in 19th century Cincinnati. Of Fred A. Geier's high school years, C. Wood Walter would write, "My memories of his attainments of that age are somewhat misty, but as this volume of reminiscences is intended, I believe, to be of inspirational value to his collegiate son Frederick, I will say that his grades were **reasonably** high, and his conduct record **reasonably** unblemished."

It is believed that Fred contemplated a college education after his graduation from Woodward High School in 1884. C. Wood Walter recorded that both he and Fred crammed during the torrid summer of 1884 for college entrance exams that were to be taken in the fall. They entered into an arrangement to tutor each other. German was Fred's specialty while C. Wood Walter's talent was Latin.

C. Wood Walter's account of the summer of 1884, however, does not mesh with Frederick V. Geier's understanding of his father's youth. He recorded that his father spent the summer of 1884 in Ironton, Ohio, where he worked as a clerk in a drug store. And that account has a great degree of plausibility as Fred's uncle, Otto Otten, Jr., was a principal in a leading Ironton drug store.

The firm of Otten and Tyler had been established in the early 1880s and was reported to have flourished. The partners were Otto Otten, Jr., popularly referred to as "Doc" Otten, and E. Fred Tyler. Some years later, when Fred Tyler was elected mayor of Ironton in 1897, the business was known as the Otten Drug Store.

The Tylers and the Ottens became in-laws when "Doc" Otten married Elizabeth Tyler, Fred Tyler's sister. In the Ironton, Ohio, centennial publication "Glorius Past", it is chronicled that: "Both members of the firm (Otten and Tyler) are among our most-respected and intelligent citizens. Their drug store is a real beauty, and is kept in elegant style."

It is difficult to say what influence Uncle Otto Otten had on his nephew. Otto Otten, however, was widely respected for his gentlemanly qualities. Even as a centenarian and blind, "Doc" Otten would stand when a lady entered the room. He possessed musical talents and was a member of quartette choir in Ironton where he sang at various functions including the funeral of John Campbell, the founder of Ironton.[19]

During the three years following his graduation from Woodward, Fred A. Geier had a number of jobs. At times he worked for his father in the wood-turning business, he sold electric dynamos, and for two months he was with O'Neal and Price, a firm that manufactured belting and sold factory and mill supplies. But as the firm was planning to liquidate, he left to return to his father's shop.

While Fred Geier was gaining practical business experience by day, at night he attended commercial classes at The Nelson Business College. This educational institution was established in Cincinnati in 1856 by Richard Nelson, a native of Ireland, who sought to better meet the needs of the banking, manufacturing and mercantile communities. The school,

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[18] Rev. Charles Frederic Goss, *Cincinnati, The Queen City*, Vol. 2, (Cincinnati and Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1912), 408.

[19] Otto N. Otten, brother of Sophia Louise Otten Geier, was born 3 August 1848, in Germany and emigrated to America with his parents in 1849. In 1915 "Doc" Otten left Ironton after his drug store, for many years located in the Masonic Temple Building, was destroyed by fire. He moved to Cincinnati where he established another drug store that operated for many years. He and his wife, Elizabeth Tyler, were the parents of one daughter, Lillian Otten, who was an accomplished organist. He died on 28 January 1949 at the home of his daughter in Columbus, Ohio, having celebrated his 100th birthday the previous August.

which existed into the 20th century, taught business penmanship, banking and business transactions, bookkeeping, correspondence, shorthand, typewriting and mercantile law.

In the fall of 1886 Fred Geier is believed to have departed from Cincinnati for the frontier West. He went to Newton, Kansas, where he was in charge of the real estate department of the First National Bank. It is claimed that he gained his position because of his German language proficiency, which facilitated transactions with the German Mennonite settlers, who had emigrated from Russia. But it is also believed that both Philip and Fred Geier may have been aware of potential real estate profits to be made on the frontier.

And Newton was, indeed, a booming and raucous frontier town. In 1871, when the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe reached Newton, it was described as a cow town of "wild nightlife, gross wickedness, and bloody gun-battles unequalled in any other cow town in Kansas." One early resident of Newton recalled, "The firing of guns in and around town was so continuous that it reminded one of a Fourth of July celebration from daylight to midnight. There was shooting when I got up and when I went to bed."

That Philip Geier foresaw some profitable business possibilities while his son was gaining banking experience and acquiring the feel of real money is evidenced by Dr. Otto Geier's later observation:

> Faith, and it took the family many years to unload the town lots on the same farmers who had sold them to us, time having proven that while corn grows tall in Kansas, investments don't grow there at all.

For approximately two years between his graduation from Woodward and his departure for Kansas, Fred A. Geier was employed in a number of endeavors and enterprises. Someone unaware of his purposeful and dedicated later life might have concluded that Fred couldn't hold a job. Instead, possibly with his father's cooperation and direction, he was engaged in a business learning process similar to the management trainee today who is required to spend time in many of a corporation's departments.

THE DEATH OF PHILIP GEIER

The year 1887 would be a year of endings as well as beginnings. Fred Geier had returned to Cincinnati during April. His father, according to an account published in 1901, had become semi-retired from the wood-turning business in 1886.[20] It would not have been surprising if his physical condition influenced his decision to ease up. Casual observers and friends alike described Philip as a man of "full habit" and "aldermanic proportions." He weighed over 200 pounds.

Still, Philip Geier's death on the afternoon of 7 May 1887 was a shock. While the facts of the death are well established, events relating to the return of the corpse to Cincinnati was the subject of sensational reporting in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. Philip Geier was attending a meeting of German Evangelical Church Synod that began on Thursday 5 May 1887 in

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[20] That Philip Geier had retired from the wood-turning business at the end of 1866 is established conclusively by a lease agreement drafted during December 1886 and signed by Philip Geier and Bernard Leeker, et al. According to the document "all the machine tools and implements and good will of the business formerly carried out of such premises by said lessor [Philip Geier]" as well as the building was leased from 1 December 1866 for a term of eight years with the "privilege of five years more." The monthly rent was $116.67. The lessees were Bernard H. Leeker and Henry Finkler, partners in the Liberty Furniture Company. The lessees were also given the option of purchasing the premises during the term of the lease for $15,333.67.

Boonville, Indiana (Cincinnati Evangelical churches belonged to the Indiana District). St. Johannes Kirche, today St. John's United Church of Christ, was the host congregation for the 54 pastors and 35 delegates who assembled. Philip Geier was a delegate representing Zion German Evangelical Church.

At the afternoon session on Saturday 7 May delegate Geier arose to make a few remarks to the conference. It is written that Zion's pastor, Rev. Christian Spathelf, had previously addressed the body and the subject at hand was merely a matter of some printed material. The *Enquirer* reported, "He had scarcely risen from his seat when he was noticed to stagger, and the next second fell on the floor dead. A physician was called, and pronounced his case apoplexy."

Other printed accounts corroborate the *Enquirer's* reporting. The denomination's magazine, *Der Friedensbote* (Messenger of Peace) added that as Philip Geier started to speak he brought his hand to his forehead as if searching for the right word. A stroke was given as the cause of death. The magazine correspondent wrote, "Bewilderment and terror went through the gathering." That evening the conference members accompanied the corpse to the train station where the casket began its controversial journey to Cincinnati.

There are different versions of what happened from the time Philip Geier's casket was shipped from Boonville until its arrival in Cincinnati. One story was that Philip Geier had been put into the coffin while he was still alive. That account related that ten hours after the death was pronounced the baggage master at Vincennes, John Kuster, was helping to transfer the casket from an Evansville and Terre Haute train to an Ohio and Mississippi train. Kuster was being assisted by Clark Harvey, who declared that he heard the dead man kick against the lid of the coffin three or four times. The Monday 9 May *Enquirer* account read in part:

> Mr. Kuster said to your correspondent: "I have handled more coffins than any man about this depot, and I flatter myself that I am not superstitious. The sensation I experienced in lifting the coffin from one car to another was the same as lifting a crate having a live calf in it. The coffin seemed to be alive. There was no dead weight about it. When life has left a body it is all dead weight. We only had a few minutes in which to transfer the remains, and it was suggested by some of the boys that the box be opened and an examination made of the corpse. To this a strenuous objection was entered by an unknown gentleman, who accompanied the remains. I didn't like the way he acted."[21]

The Vincennes depot master telegraphed to nearby Washington, Indiana, and asked that the coffin be opened and the corpse be examined. Again, the unidentified man accompanying the corpse successfully objected to the request. From Washington word was sent to the Cincinnati Chief of Police Deitsch to intercept the corpse. What was discovered, again according to the newspaper account, was that after the casket was opened in Cincinnati it was found that "the man was lying on his face, his shroud was torn, and there were other indications going to show that Geier had come to life after having been placed in the coffin."

The family's response to the rumors came from Philip Geier's son-in-law, Dr. C. W. Tangeman. The *Enquirer* reporter questioned Dr. Tangeman about the account that his father-in-law had returned to life and turned over in the coffin. "He (Tangeman) seemed greatly astounded, and declared emphatically that there was not the slightest foundation for it. 'I hope you won't print such a vile story,' he said. 'I opened the coffin when it arrived here,

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[21] "Horrible Rumor Concerning the Death of Philip Geier," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 9 May 1887, p. 4.

and there was no change in the position of the body or indication of any such condition as you have heard of.'"

According to the *Enquirer*, the rumors that excited Vincennes and southern Indiana apparently were not given much credence by the Geier family. Zion Church's records of Philip Geier's death and burial do not mention any unusual circumstances; nor does the coverage of the district conference that appeared the following month in the denominational magazine. Other than two stories in the *Enquirer,* Philip Geier's death went unreported in local newspapers. Philip Geier's funeral took place on 10 May 1887 at Zion Church, with burial following in the family plot in Spring Grove Cemetery.

STARTING AT THE CINCINNATI SCREW AND TAP COMPANY

The death of Philip Geier certainly changed Fred A. Geier's life. What is still enigmatic is the role the father had in his son's decision to seek employment with the struggling little company known then as the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company.

Frederick V. Geier said that his father's association with the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company began when, as executor of his father's estate, Fred called on the company to dispose of a machine they had sold to his father. There were also accounts that the principals of the Screw and Tap Company were indebted to Philip Geier but the schedule of property belonging to Philip Geier's estate disproves that notion.

It is known that both Philip and Fred A. Geier were well acquainted with Fred Holz's and George Mueller's Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company. Fred Holz first recalled meeting Fred Geier while the young Geier was with his father. Holz wrote, "You (Fred Geier) were at the age when boys change from knee trousers to long trousers." Holz further related, in a testimonial letter at the time of Fred A. Geier's 50th birthday:

> A few years later you had already taken an active interest in a dynamo manufacturing business and you succeeded in selling us a small dynamo for making electric light for our shop. I did admire at the time your courage for going in such a business. Generally speaking dynamos were a doubtful proposition for sometimes they worked and sometimes they did not furnish the juice. Kilowatts were only known to practical electricians since they were the only one (who) knew what was what. I remember many times when we had to call on your partner to assist us to give the machine a fresh start.[22]

It is unclear what role Philip Geier had in his son's employment with a dynamo manufacturing company, but some connection is highly likely. Philip Geier was described as "one of the financial pioneers in things electrical in Cincinnati." The Geiers, father and son, shared an interest in the emerging technologies and enterprises of the time. Sometime between 1883-1885 Philip Geier visited the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company to have work done on a type of electric lamp. Whether Philip Geier had inquired during the spring of 1887 about having his son associated with the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company is unclear. Ernest Chace, an early director and the Mill's superintendent, reminisced, "It is the writer's (Chace) firm belief that if he (Fred A. Geier) is asked he will still insist that he found the opening."

What is clear is that Fred Geier began what would be a life-long association with the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company (and its successor companies) as an employee. Indeed,

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[22] Fred Holz, A testimonial letter, dated 6 June 1916, prepared for the 50th birthday of Fred A. Geier. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

he was a company employee before he was either an owner or an officer. Fred Holz recalled that young Geier was first employed at the company in 1887 shortly before his 21st birthday on 23 June. Holz's recollections are supported by Chace who wrote, "Into this place struggling along with its miscellaneous ailments came a young man, not yet of age, the son of the aforesaid aldermanic appearing gentleman."

Emerging technologies aside, many observers at the time undoubtedly concluded that the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company, located in an old store at the northeast corner of Second and Plum Streets, was a doubtful proposition. Chace recalled:

> Into this shop was moved the last hopes of many an inventor, who very likely had not paid his bill, and also the business of making screws, perpetual motion machines, steam flash engines, clay pigeon traps, paper bag machinery, cartridge loading machinery and as a side line, milling cutters and cutter grinders.

While the product line of the company appears a bit eclectic, the three major partners were headed for a parting of the ways. The company's operations had been the domain of Fred Holz and George Mueller while a one-third capital investment was subscribed by Jacob E. Bloom, who was also the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company's first president.

When Jacob Bloom bought into the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company on 10 March 1884, there was an agreement that Bloom could not withdraw any profits for three years, except for $300 a year. At a special meeting of the company stockholders convened on 9 June 1887, Bloom demanded his share of undivided company profits, which were calculated to be approximately $1,200, as more than three years had passed. Holz, Mueller, and Bloom differed on this point and no agreement was reached. Further discussion was postponed ten days until Saturday, 18 June 1887.

There is no further mention in the company minute books whether the scheduled 18 June meeting was held. It appears that Bloom was becoming more interested in terminating his business relationship with Holz and Mueller and that someone approached Fred Geier to buy out Bloom's interest. It is possible that negotiations toward this end may have been in the works within days as Fred Geier received an one year loan for $1,128.22 from Frederick Luecke on 24 June 1887. Luecke was a friend of the Geier family and later (1891-1895) became the Mill's vice president.

Jacob Bloom, a 1869 graduate of Woodward High School, was commissioned a second lieutenant after graduating from the United States Military Academy, Class of 1873. He ranked seventh in a class of 40. After an early military career in the 1870s where he served in the Sioux Indian campaign (1876) and in the Nez Perce campaign (1877), he returned to civilian life in Cincinnati.

During the early 1880s Bloom was involved with several small businesses including the: (1) Ligowsky Clay Pigeon Company, secretary and treasurer, 1882-1884, vice president and general manager, 1885-1887; (2) Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company, president, 1884-1887; (3) The Matt Morgan Art Pottery Company, president, 1885.

Bloom, a man of many interests, then attended Cincinnati Law College for the school year of 1885 and 1886 and worked in the law firm of Hoadley, Johnson and Colston during 1886, perhaps the most prestigious law firm of the time. Bloom specialized in the incorporation of manufacturing companies and his hand was apparent in the establishment of the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company as a legal entity. He was admitted to the Ohio Bar Association on 5 October 1886 and became a practicing attorney shortly thereafter. By 1887 Bloom desired to relocate to New York City to practice law and began to divest of his Cincinnati business interests and responsibilities.

On 16 August 1887 a deal was struck and Fred Geier bought out Jacob Bloom's stock in the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company. Bloom would receive $7,000 for his 400 shares with Geier paying $3,000 in cash and giving a one-year note for the remainder. Geier's promissory note carried a six-percent rate of interest.

The following month, on 5 September 1887, new officers were elected at the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company to reflect the change in company ownership. The new officers were: Fred Holz, president; George A. Mueller, vice president; and Fred A. Geier, secretary and treasurer. Fred A. Geier had found his place. Three years of exploring business opportunities were over; he would never leave.

CHAPTER II

THE MATURE YEARS

The death of Philip Geier was the real coming of age of his oldest son. Upon Fred's shoulders fell the responsibility of being the man of the house. In his twentieth year, Fred was seven years older than his brother Otto, and his two other brothers, Philip and Walter, were ten and eight respectively. There were also six sisters in the family although one, Anna Geier Tangeman, was married at the time of her father's death.

Both by age and temperament young Fred seemed to step easily into the role of a surrogate father. Fred's youngest brother, Walter, would later write about his business and personal experiences with big brother:

> With a High School education and about one year at the Cincinnati University, I entered the employ of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company in the fall of 1898 with an exaggerated form of the usual swelled head of a twenty year old supposedly educated cub. It was Fred's lot to play the role of daddy to his brothers, as father passed away over twenty-nine years ago, and in his dual capacity of daddy-boss he quickly transformed the inflated head to a shrinking fit by electing me to the job of mail and telephone boy at five per week.[1]

Philip O. Geier also would recall family scenes from the time following his father's death:

> At the fatal age of 13 I remember looking forward to the hour of 6:30 P.M. awaiting Fred's return from the office, at which time he would indicate to me whether there were any collar buttons or studs to be put into shirt fronts. My eagerness to do this work for him was the reason that every once in a while he gave me a piece of chewing gum for this tedious work.[2]

Fred's three brothers appear to have had the advantages of a fairly normal childhood. The household was large, so large in fact that the Ohio Avenue home would later become a University of Cincinnati dormitory after the turn-of-the-century. Fred's maternal grandparents, Otto and Louise Otten, lived in the Ohio Avenue home in their later years. The household was so big that, according to one family story, a girl from Kentucky who was seeking a job as a servant decided to look elsewhere after observing the numerous inhabitants.

The household consisted of animals as well as family members. Dr. Otto P. Geier wrote of these years, "...we other three [brothers] were raising rabbits, guinea pigs, pigeons and 'Cain' generally, and doing our best to bend the back of a mustang pony."

That Fred Geier was able to keep on top of his rambunctious brothers is indicated by this vignette. One summer brothers "P. O." Geier and Otto rode to jobs at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company on a lone mustang pony. They took turns. One day it was Otto's turn to ride but P. O. beat him to the pony. Otto was in hot pursuit and overtook him near

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[1] Walter H. Geier, A testimonial letter, 1916, prepared for the 50th birthday of Fred A. Geier. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[2] Philip O. Geier, A testimonial letter, 1916, prepared for the 50th birthday of Fred A. Geier. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

the shop entrance where an altercation began. Oldest brother Fred was called out to settle the dispute. "His decision was that neither one of the boys should ride the pony, so he rode it home himself, and the boys had to stay and fold circulars for the balance of the day."

It is not only through the recollections of siblings that Fred Geier's assumption of the family's destiny and providence is known. A former Ohio Avenue neighbor, Albert H. Morrill, wrote of this time to Dr. Otto P. Geier nearly 47 years later at the time of Fred's death. Morrill recalled, "...what you have not forgotten is the kind, manly, sympathetic and fatherly manner which the then boy Fred took charge of your shocked and afflicted family, particularly your sweet mother."[3]

Naturally, there were changes and it appears that early on Fred set the pattern that the rest of family soon followed. One major change from the past was in the matter of church affiliation. Philip Geier had died while speaking at a church conference in Boonville, Indiana. He was a delegate from Zion German Evangelical Church to the Indiana District Conference to which southwestern Ohio congregations were affiliated. And Zion Church played an important part in the lives of the entire Geier household. Fred's cousin, August Tuechter, remarked about the years before Philip Geier's death, "I think of the many times we went together to the Zion Church; to the Sunday School, to the Preacher School, as we called it, and how gradually we became active in that old organization, for which both your and my grandparents and parents did so much."

August Tuechter's reference to the "Preacher School" may reveal something about Fred A. Geier's elementary and junior high education. It is known that Zion Evangelical Church operated a parochial school and it is possible that it was at Zion Church rather than in the Cincinnati Public Schools that Fred was educated prior to his admittance to Woodward High School.

Within a year of Philip Geier's death, Fred was attending Presbyterian services at Clifford Chapel which was a dependency of the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church. He formally affiliated with the Presbyterian Church when on 28 March 1888 he became a member through a "profession of faith" instead of merely transferring his denominational affiliation.

One can speculate that an ambitious young man might have been seeking a more prestigious denomination that was based elsewhere than in Over-the-Rhine. Even at its zenith, Zion Evangelical Church was never a very imposing edifice. In fact the residence of the preacher's family was located within the church on the ground floor, while the sanctuary was found on an upper level.

The Geier family home, which had been in Cincinnati's West End and Over-the-Rhine prior to 1880, was now on a hilltop on Ohio Avenue. The move reflected a favorable change in the family's fortunes. Could membership in a "suburban" church be nothing more than a matter of convenience? Perhaps? But the reasons for Fred's denominational change may have been far more personal than social or theological. The preacher at Clifford Chapel was Joseph Henry Cone, a Woodward High School classmate of both Fred Geier and C. Wood Walter. And, it was Reverend Cone who later was married to Emma Geier, the second oldest of Philip and Louise Geier's ten children.

Fred's contributions to Clifford Chapel took both practical and aesthetic forms. The Clifford Chapel finances were in a sore state, indeed close to insolvency. Fred put together

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[3] Albert H. Morrill, Letter of condolence to Dr. Otto P. Geier, 29 March 1934. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati. In addition to being a Geier family neighbor, Morrill was an attorney who was active in business and civic affairs. He would become president of the Kroger Grocery and Baking Company.

a campaign for financial redemption that, when presented, filled one listener with "considerable wonder and claim."

In another vein he is said to have contributed to services by occasionally presenting tenor solos. Two of his favorite arias were "Be Thou Faithful Unto Death" and "Be Not Afraid." C. Wood Walter wrote, "Both of these [were] peculiarly appropriate to our financial situation."

On 1 April 1896 Fred A. Geier's three brothers, three remaining unmarried sisters, and his mother transferred their church memberships to Mt. Auburn Presbyterian.

MAYERS AND LOTZES

Fred's attention to the needs of a small business, large family and a new church did not consume all of his energy. Social matters were not neglected. About this time at the start of the Gay Nineties he attended the "Jersey Treat Dances" at Evans Hall in Mt. Auburn. Another future brother-in-law, George Merryweather, noted that "...he was just as willing and arduous in his task with his feet and heart, as he had been with his hands and head in receipting a bill."

Perhaps it was at these Jersey Treat Dances that Fred courted Amanda Virginia Mayer. Amanda Mayer was born in Henderson, Kentucky, on 10 December 1866, to Virginius Marius Mayer and Charlotte Lotze Mayer. Little is recorded about her father, Virginius Marius, who moved to Cincinnati circa 1879 when he became associated with A. Lotze's Sons & Company, a business founded by his wife's father, Adolphus Lotze. Virginius Mayer was said to be very good company and to be always jolly. He is believed to have been born on the high seas during his parents' emigration to America in 1832 and to have been named after the sailing vessel and the ship's master. Prior to moving to Cincinnati he was active in the Mayer family hardware store in Henderson where his father and brother also had achieved local renown as skilled gunsmiths.

Charlotte Lotze's father was Adolphus Lotze (1812-1877), a native of Muenden, Kingdom of Hanover, Germany. Adolphus emigrated to America in 1831 and worked in his trade as a tinner for several years in various eastern cities before settling in Cincinnati. In the Queen City in 1837 he went into business at the southwest corner of Fifth and Vine Streets making oil burning lamps and chandeliers. Soon thereafter he started making warm air furnaces. A family biographical sketch records that, "Mr. Lotze built the first hot air furnace west of the Allegheny Mountains, which he installed in 1839, and received a patent upon his system of hot air heating." Later Adolphus Lotze expanded into the manufacture of cooking ranges and wood burning furnaces.[4]

It appears that the firm of A. Lotze Sons' Company may have reached its zenith circa 1870 when yearly sales averaged $500,000. Adolphus Lotze's son, Frederick B. Lotze, recorded:

> About the year 1870 furnaces were sold throughout a large part of the country, including western New York, Pennsylvania, all of West Virginia,

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[4] Miles Greenwood (1807-1885), a manufacturer who bought the Eagle Iron Works and built the company into the second largest iron factory in the West, was a friend and confidant of Adolphus Lotze. He loaned his friend the money with which to construct a five-story brick building on Walnut Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets. The loan was not secured, such was Miles Greenwood's confidence in his friend. Greenwood's faith was justified as the loan, at eight per cent interest, was paid off in five years. The Lotze family business remained at the site until 1903.

> Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Indian Territory, Arkansas, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. The sale of ranges covered the same territory, some being shipped to Boston, New York City, Baltimore, Daytona, Denver, California and Mexico City. About the year 1861 he started the manufacture of wood burning furnaces....[5]

On 18 February 1840 Adolphus Lotze married Magdalena Bering, variously described as a native of Landau, Bavaria, or Billigheim am Rhein.[6] When she was 15 she had emigrated to America along with seven brothers and six sisters. Her journey from New York City was by the Erie Canal to Buffalo and thence overland to Cincinnati. Of her family it is written that:

> She was a daughter of Balthazar Bering, one of the secretaries of Napoleon Bonaparte, and was a descendant of the celebrated navigator [Vitus] Bering who discovered the Bering Strait. The name was originally Von Bering but the "von" was dropped when members of the family became connected with Napoleon in revolutionary times.[7]

Magdalena Bering's father was an attorney as was her grandfather, who is said to have been one of the jurists employed in framing the Napoleonic Code. It was written that members of the Bering family pursued legal careers as early as the fourteenth century.[8]

Before moving to Cincinnati in the late 1870s, Virginius Marius Mayer had been affiliated with his brother, Jacob F. Mayer, and his father, George Adam Mayer, in a family hardware business. The business dealt with cutlery, sporting goods, agricultural implements, mill supplies and builders' supplies, but it is believed that commerce in guns was a key factor in the firm's growth and prosperity.

Both George A. Mayer and Jacob Mayer are listed as gunsmiths on the 1860 Federal census, while Virginius apparently was primarily in the business or selling end of the company. Amanda's grandfather, George A. Mayer, had learned the gunsmith trade in his native Germany.[9] He settled in Henderson, Kentucky, in February, 1835. In Edmund L.

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[5] Frederick B. Lotze, Unpublished "History of the firm of A. Lotze Sons Co. From the birth of Adolphus Lotze, my father," 6 March 1939. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[6] Landau is a town in the Rhine Palatinate today but it was a part of the Kingdom of Bavaria in the 19th century. Billigheim am Rhein does not lie directly on the banks of the Rhine River as its name might imply, rather it is situated in the Rhine Valley not far from Landau. A person from a small village might well identify himself as being an inhabitant of a larger, better known municipality.

[7] Charles Frederic Goss, *Cincinnati: The Queen City, 1788-1912* (Chicago, S. J. Clarke, 1912), 4:883.

[8] Conteur, "Interesting Facts Concerning a Family of Prominence in Early Cincinnati," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 8 June 1924, page not found, possibly in another edition than the one microfilmed at the Cincinnati Historical Society.

[9] George A. Mayer, who at the time of his death in 1894 was nearly 97, was reported to be the oldest inhabitant of Henderson and, possibly, western Kentucky. His trade as a gunsmith was not one that was in the family as his father, Johann Jakob Mayer, was a *wagenmeister*, a carriage or wagon inspector. The father and grandfather of his first wife, Margaretha C. Stohhauer, were, respectively a master shoemaker and a cooper. An interesting fact about George A. Mayer was that he and his family emigrated to America in 1832 as members of the Muelhausen [Thuringia] Immigration Society whose agent was John Augustus

Starling's *History of Henderson County, Kentucky* (1837) it is recorded that, "By close attention to business, honest work and reasonable compensation, Mr. Mayer held the entire gunsmithing trade of the country for several counties, and his prudence led him to lay aside enough to increase his business and make himself financially comfortable."

Charlotte Lotze Mayer is believed to have been a very determined and purposeful young lady. When raiders (the Lotze family account was that it was Morgan's raiders) passed through Henderson, the hardware store was an obvious target. Charlotte is said to have personally barred the entry of the raiders into the store. However, the account of the encounter of Charlotte Mayer and General John Morgan's men is questionable, as there is no record of the Confederate officer entering war time Henderson. There were other Southern military bands who did penetrate the boundaries of this western Kentucky town. And in the Civil War's aftermath, at 11:00 a.m. on 10 September 1864, 21 mounted desperadoes raced into Henderson, where they forced the cashier of the Farmers' Bank to open the vault and made off with $8,430. The robbers then plundered various other businesses, after which they rode out of town. The Mayers' hardware store was located nearby, less than a block away, and it is possible that Charlotte turned away some of these armed highwaymen instead of the famed Confederate general's cavalrymen.

The oral history passed down through the generations of the Lotze family concerning Charlotte Mayer's standing-off General Morgan's men cannot be dismissed even though this does not appear to be recorded in any primary material that is now extant. War-time Henderson was a tough place to live, especially if you were considered to be on the "wrong" side. There is a story told that a gunshop in Henderson was raided by men associated with General Morgan. Perhaps because of this attack, it is known that the George A. Mayer & Sons gun shop had established a branch or relocated to Evansville, Indiana, sometime during the Civil War.

In 1864 the shop was located in Evansville at Number 28 First Street between Sycamore and Vine Streets at the "Sign of the Big Gun." The store dealt in double and single barrel shot guns, rifles, pistols, knives and ammunition. These were prized commodities, indeed, in those turbulent war-torn years.

Of Fred A. Geier's courtship of Amanda Mayer and of their marriage on 21 September 1892 we know very little. Fred and Amanda and George Mayer (Amanda's brother) and Matilda Geier (Fred's sister) were frequent companions at various social occasions. The foursome were together so frequently that one relative dubbed them "The Big Four." The Big Four was a reference to a rail line that served Chicago, St. Louis, Cleveland and Cincinnati.

They were married by the Rev. Joseph Henry Cone, who was a classmate of Fred's at Woodward High School. He was a Presbyterian minister, educated at Lane Theological Seminary, assigned to organize the Clifford Chapel at the corner of Vine Street and St. Clair Avenue in Corryville and active in that congregation's life from 1890-1893, and perhaps more importantly, he may have already been considered to be a member of the Geier family. On 6 December 1893 he married Fred's second oldest sister, Emma, in a service conducted by the minister of the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church.

According to Cincinnati City Directories the young Geier couple first lived on the west side of Fairview Avenue, north of Straight Street, from 1893-1895 and the west side of University Court, north of Straight, during 1896-1897. It is most likely that the two addresses were in fact one as Fairview Avenue extended to Clifton Avenue in the late nineteenth

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Roebling. Later Roebling became famous as the master bridge-builder who designed the Cincinnati Suspension Bridge and the Brooklyn Bridge.

century. Straight Street was a dividing line between Fairview and Clifton Heights, originally two distinct suburban communities. Fred A. Geier's parents, as well as Amanda's, had lived in the eastern portion of Fairview on Ohio Avenue. This area had become easily accessible to the Cincinnati Basin and business district when the Bellevue Incline opened in 1876. But the western portion of Fairview remained relatively undeveloped before the Cincinnati Street Railway Company built the Fairview Incline in 1892-1894.

"Fairview Heights," the western part of Fairview and a few streets at the southern end of Clifton Heights, developed differently than other parts of Cincinnati. Elsewhere, population growth brought city services. Here, because of prominent and politically-connected landowners, the city services were established first. From the end of the 1880s to the mid-1890s a public school, police station, water and gas lines, sewers, street improvements and a fire station were put into service while the population was still sparse. Development was helped by the fact that Christian Moerlein's son-in-law, John Goetz, Jr., was president of the Board of Fire Commissioners, and Gustav Tafel, later mayor of Cincinnati, was a member of the City Board of Administration. These gentlemen, along with several other prominent citizens, were area residents and also neighborhood developers.

Fred and Amanda Geier lived on the west side of University Court, a street not much more than two blocks long. From early photographs of that time we know that the street was wide and smooth and utilities had been installed. The handful of residences were surrounded by extensive grounds. The houses were substantial two-and-three-story structures that frequently were named. Such was the case of Mrs. Gustav Billing's estate, which was named "Socorro" after the site of her mine in New Mexico Territory. Soon-to-be-Mayor Gustav Tafel's residence was named "The Terraces." The earliest years of the Gay Nineties were certainly optimistic times. Fred and Amanda had established residence in what was unquestionably one of Cincinnati's most fashionable addresses.

A year before his marriage he had taken The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company to new quarters on Spring Grove Avenue. The year following their marriage, 1893, boded well. A World's Fair opened in Chicago which was planned to celebrate the genius and productivity of the age.

THE PANIC OF 1893

Then the bubble burst. On 3 May 1893, only three days after the opening of the Columbian Exposition in the Windy City, the trust that controlled the production of twine went bankrupt. By year's end 600 banks or savings and loan associations had shut down their doors and 15,000 businesses had failed. Joblessness climbed to 25 percent in Pennsylvania and 43 percent in Michigan. In New York City 20,000 homeless camped at police stations and other temporary shelters. By the spring of 1894, Jacob Coxey of Ohio was leading an "army" of unemployed into Washington, D.C. with a demand for road building and other public works projects to employ the jobless.

Conditions were also very bad in Cincinnati, and The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was not spared the trials of this depression. One old-timer later recalled that the Mill was shut down for ten months, but this is not confirmed by accounts in the company books. Still, there were few or no orders to fill or customers to be found. Fred Geier's own words at a time of another depression in 1921 give a more accurate account of the way things were at the Mill during the Panic of 1893.

> In 1893 we were a mighty small company...the whole world was in trouble. I called in my handful of men and said, "We are up against it. We

> can't borrow any money. Here's a chance for us to get an order if we give the fellow nine months time on it. Boys, what shall we do? We can't pay you cash for your wages. I believe we can give you 25 cents on a dollar, and give you the balance of your wages in a little piece of paper which will say that we agree to pay that balance of your wages sometime within 12 months."[10]

The workers accepted; the alternative would have been neither employment nor wages in those hard times. Merchants and businesses went along. Fred Geier noted that the company's script "was used in butcher shops and bake shops by our men just like money." And on the promised date the Company redeemed its script.

Although some historians state that the Panic of 1893 was not over until 1897, the Mill was on the road to prosperity beginning in 1895, with sales soaring. In 1894 the Mill paid its first cash dividend: $9.00 a share.

According to Company tradition the business Fred Geier referred to in his speech to his handful of employees in 1893 was for 12 milling machines from a bicycle maker. This was a very substantial order in those days. The bike builder was reported, according to different sources, to be located in either Cincinnati or Indianapolis. The 12-machine order was said not only to have saved the day for the Mill but also to have marked the beginning of a booming bicycle company.

Material in the Mill's archives and at the Indiana State Library furnishes clues that permit one to make a persuasive case as to the identity of the bicycle maker. In 1893 many cycle manufacturers were short of cash and bank loans were next to impossible. But Charles Finley Smith of Indianapolis felt that it was the right time to expand his small workshop, located in a building in back of a theater, which was making children's bicycles and to build adult models. The high-wheeled bike was giving way to the two wheeled safety, the bicycle we know today. In 1892 a black man from New York had opened a bicycle riding school in that citadel of society, Newport, Rhode Island. Bicycle riding quickly became the "social thing" to do. The fad evolved into a national fever "...that even put the roller-skating craze [of the late 1880s] into the shade." While it may have begun as a fad, by 1895 the safety bicycle was a convenience more common than the horse and buggy.

In 1887 when Charles Finley Smith had moved to Indianapolis he was, financially speaking, "worth nothing." But the two-wheeled bicycle boom allowed Smith to prosper and his tiny workshop grew by 1895 into one of the four or five largest bicycle plants in the country and finest of its type in the world. *Indianapolis of Today* reported, "At the time of this writing the company were [sic] employing 1,071 hands supplying the demands of a trade worldwide in its tributary area, 350 bicycles being built every ten hours, the anticipated output for the year closing Dec. 31, 1896, being no less than 50,000 wheels." Smith had become one of the most prominent manufacturers in Indiana. Beginning with a capitalization of $7,000 in 1887, the Indiana Bicycle Company plants were sold to bicycle and rubber trusts for $1,000,000 in 1899.

The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company catalog for 1895 provides the following testimonial and footnote that link the Mill and the bike builder.

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[10] Fred A. Geier, Speech delivered to Cincinnati Milling Machine Company employees, 30 March 1921, pp. 6-7. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

Indiana Bicycle Co
Indianapolis, Ind.
Dec 31st., 1891

The Cincinnati Milling Machine C.[ompany]

Gentlemen:—The milling machines and Universal cutter and Reamer grinder which we bought of you about four years ago have given perfect satisfaction, and we have seen nothing better.

Yours very truly,

Indiana Bicycle Co
C. F. Smith, Pres[iden]t.

NOTE— This Company has since bought eighteen more No. 2 Plain machines and are now using twenty-five of our milling machines.

Smith's testimonial tells of, in words from the 1895 Mill catalog title, a customer "that is well satisfied." The catalog's footnote, a singular occurrence, reveals a major buyer, a buyer that could well have ordered the 12 milling machines during the panic of 1893 that permitted the Mill to continue operations.

Fred A. Geier bet on a bike builder in 1893 who was betting on a fad. Whether it was happenstance or cool calculation, both men won and grew to be leaders in their fields at a time when many others failed.

LIFE AND DEATH

On the home front, the marriage of Fred and Amanda brought forth three children: Frederick Virginius Geier on 5 September 1893, Helen Margaret Geier on 18 March 1895, and Virginia Amanda Geier on 18 May 1898.

Fred A. Geier, Frederick V. Geier, Helen M. Geier and Amanda Mayer Geier

Daughter Virginia would later relate that her mother's physician had told Amanda, after the birth of Helen, that it would be dangerous for her to bear additional children. But that was information that was not shared with Fred Geier. Two months and two days after Virginia's birth, Amanda died of heart failure. Her body could no longer sustain the strains incurred from childbirth. But before her death she had walked up-and-down Evans Place (they had moved to North Clifton in 1898) where she proudly showed everyone her baby.

Many of the important moments in the Geier family history have been private occasions. Illustrative of this is the brief death announcement that appeared in the 21 July 1898 *Cincinnati Commercial*. It read:

> Amanda Virginia Mayer, wife of Fred A. Geier, at the residence in Clifton, 6 a.m., July 20. Funeral services at the home, Friday July 22 at 2:30 p.m. Burial private. Please omit flowers.

The death of Amanda was devastating to the Geier household. Husband Fred was now a widower and two young children and an infant were without a mother. Baby Virginia was placed with a German wet nurse who lived outside of the city. It was Virginia Geier McCurdy who later had the most vivid remembrances of this traumatic time, even though she was too young to personally remember. She felt that her father's dedication to civic enterprises was, in part, a result of his effort to overcome the depression and alleviate the sadness of his great loss.

Amanda's death brought about other changes. The surviving family members moved back to the Geier family homestead on Ohio Avenue from their North Clifton home at 3435 Evans Place. Why the Geiers had moved to this neighborhood is not clear. Perhaps the growing family, often augmented by family relatives and friends, dictated a move from their University Court quarters. Evans Place was a comfortable upper middle-class neighborhood to be sure. But University Court had been the site of even grander residences.

Evans Place, which is west of Clifton Avenue and north of Ludlow Avenue, was near the homes of Fred Holz and of Fred's uncle, Jacob Geier. Later Ernest DuBrul, who would be an ally of Fred A. Geier on the University of Cincinnati Board of Trustees, would move to Cornell Place, which the street was later called.

While it is unknown what took the Geiers out to North Clifton in 1898, it seems certain that Amanda's death made Fred want to move away from this site of sorrow. The family briefly moved back to Ohio Avenue and by 1901 had moved to the Auburndale Apartments, which were adjacent to the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church on the corner of Auburn Avenue and William Howard Taft Road. The Auburndale was a first-class apartment hotel which offered many amenities. As late as the 1930s it was the residence of some prominent *Cincinnati Blue Book* residents. Willard Crane, who spent the winter of 1907 living at the Auburndale noted, "The rooms were oversized and most comfortable. I also thought the food in the dining room was great."

GAINING GREATER CONTROL

It took less than 15 years, from 16 August 1887 when 21-year-old Fred Geier purchased Jacob Bloom's approximately one-third in the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company to 20 February 1905 when Fred Holz retired and sold him his stock, for Fred Geier to gain complete control of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company. His increasing ownership of the company, however, actually began in the earliest years of his business association.

Less than one year after he came aboard the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company as its Secretary and Treasurer, he had made three loans to the company totaling $3,950. By 1

June 1888 the indebtedness of the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company to young Geier had increased to $8,750. The loans were guaranteed, in part, by permitting Geier the option of buying 600 additional shares out of the company treasury.

A major change in the ownership of the Mill (its name having officially changed to The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company on 10 January 1889) took place in March, 1891, when George A. Mueller sold his one-third stock interest in the company to an investor and contractor, Frederick Luecke. George Mueller had been Fred Holz's original partner in the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company in 1874. There is some conjecture that the Mill's new directions, such as, moving out from Cincinnati's river basin to its new plant on Spring Grove Avenue, were too much of a gamble for George Mueller.

Fred Luecke was more than just the builder of the Spring Grove factory. He held an insurance company directorship, which may have allowed him access to funds for investing in the company. And this German immigrant was a friend of the Geier family. It was Luecke's money, in part, that enabled Fred Geier to make loans to the business. When Philip Geier died, Fred Luecke was named one of the three appraisers of the estate. And he was active in some of the same philanthropies as the Geiers and the Tuechters. He was a long-time director of the Altenheim (old people's home).

During the same period, vice-president George A. Mueller sold his stock and left the company board. His brother Oscar also departed. Oscar had been the plant superintendent and was one of the company's five directors. Oscar Mueller was one of the buyers of the screw and tap business in 1889 when it was decided that the Mill would focus exclusively on building milling machines and cutter grinders. Another director who departed at this time was John F. Otten, the company bookkeeper and Fred Geier's uncle. Otten was a Civil War veteran of whom little is known.

There were now three vacancies to fill on the five-man board. Five directors were called for in the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company's articles of incorporation and that was the board size into the early-1920s. The three new directors were Fred Luecke, Fred Geier's cousin August Tuechter, and his brother-in-law George A. Mayer.

On 15 July 1895 Fred Luecke, whose Mill title was that of vice-president, sold his stock and retired two days later. Fred Geier talked George A. Mayer into coming to the Mill full-time as its vice president, a position he held until 1906. He also assisted his brother-in-law in finding the money to buy some of Luecke's shares.

Another decade passed before there would be another change in the Mill's ownership. By 1905 The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company had again outgrown its facilities and this time Fred Geier had his eye on a grand new facility that would be located in what would turn out to be a pioneer industrial park, the Oakley Factory Colony.

This time it was the company's president, Fred Holz, who appears to have had cold feet about going along with the move. The move was considered by most observers to be a very doubtful proposition. Holz was now past 50 and he had probably made more money than he had ever imagined as sizable dividends were declared and paid in the preceding years. He decided it was the right time for him to sell his one-third interest in the Mill and to retire. The five Cincinnati Milling Machine Company directors in 1903 were: (1) Fred A. Geier, (2) Fred Holz, (3) George A. Mayer, (4) Louise Geier, Fred A. Geier's mother who had succeeded Amanda Geier, and (5) August H. Tuechter. Only the Mill's president was not related to the Geiers.

After Holz's resignation, August Tuechter stepped aside and two directors were selected to fill the vacancies: Philip O. Geier (1905-1952) and Ernest M. Chace (1905-1916).

Philip O. Geier would be the first of Fred's three brothers to take positions at the Mill and to be elected to the board of directors. Philip's entire career was in machine tools at The

Cincinnati Milling Machine Company. His early career included assignments at Marshall & Huschart Machinery Company in Chicago. He would become the Mill's purchasing agent, treasurer, and, in 1934, chairman of the board.

Ernest M. Chace, the plant's superintendent, was the only non-family member of the board. It was not until 1906 when a truly outside director was named to the board.

Fred A. Geier's complete control of the Mill would continue throughout his lifetime. As late as 1922 the five-man board of directors consisted of the four Geier brothers (Fred, Philip, Otto, and Walter) and their brother-in-law, C. Wood Walter.

One might speculate that Amanda's death may have even caused Fred to consider leaving The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company and, possibly, the machine tool business. Less than a year after her death, on 13 July 1899, Fred Geier wrote a letter to Robert C. McKinney, the treasurer and general manager of the Niles Tool Works Company. The Niles Works was based in Hamilton, Ohio, but headquartered in New York City. It was the biggest machine tool company in the world at the time. Fred A. Geier proposed selling The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company to Niles. His asking price was $800,000. Fred Geier asked McKinney to give his proposal "prompt action as we have something else under consideration." It is not certain what the other consideration was, but the response from Niles was not encouraging. McKinney replied, in a letter dated 25 July 1899, "Don't delay action any other plan you have in view, waiting a definite reply from us."

Nearly a generation afterward it is possible to conjecture why the Niles Tool Works was not nibbling at Fred Geier's proposition to sell The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company. Although the Niles Tool Works had its main plant in Hamilton, it was in the process of establishing corporate offices in New York City. It had just consolidated four companies into a new organization, which would be known as the Niles-Bement-Pond Company. The pioneering machine tool company, Pratt & Whitney, that was based in Hartford, Connecticut, is credited with the design of the Lincoln Milling Machine. In its first four decades Pratt & Whitney built 7,000 Lincoln Millers as well as lathes, drilling machines, shapers, presses and drop hammers. But by 1890 Pratt & Whitney's rapid growth resulted in recurring capital shortages. In 1892 there were rumors of a takeover by an English syndicate. The takeover was averted by a refinancing that brought in new money from stockholders in Hartford and New York. Francis A. Pratt retired in 1898 and Amos Whitney headed the company, increasingly racked by internal dissension, until it was taken over by Niles-Bement-Pond in 1901. It may well have been the case that McKinney and the other Niles officers had designs on Pratt & Whitney well before Fred Geier proposed selling them the Mill in 1899.

While Fred Geier's desire to sell may have been influenced by the death of Amanda, he was undoubtedly writing on behalf of the Mill's president, Fred Holz, and vice president, George A. Mayer. Together the three officers controlled 100 percent of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's common stock. His statement to McKinney that the Mill had "something else under consideration" was not a ploy to spur a response or to enhance the asking price for the Mill. What was under consideration was a milling machine trust that Perrin G. March and Samuel W. Skinner, officers of Cincinnati Shaper, were trying to bring about. The five years 1898-1902 would witness a burst of merger activity that was never exceeded in U.S. business history. In 1899 some 1,028 firms disappeared into mergers. Some of the industrial giants born at this time were: U.S. Steel, International Harvester, Du Pont, American Tobacco and Anaconda Copper.

On 19 October 1899 Perrin March secured an option to buy The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company for $800,000. The sale was contingent upon payment within four months of the October date. What Messers March and Skinner proposed to do was to consolidate, either through a combination or a trade arrangement, five important companies engaged in

manufacturing milling machines. The companies were said "...to manufacture probably 80 to 85 percent of all milling machines now produced in this country." The five companies were: The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company; The Kemp-Smith Machine Tool Company, Milwaukee; The Brown & Sharp Manufacturing Company, Providence, Rhode Island; The Becker-Brainerd Manufacturing Company, Hyde Park , Massachusetts; and The Waltham Watch Tool Company, Springfield, Massachusetts.

FRED A. GEIER'S MANY MILL JOBS

Fred Geier began his career with the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company as its Secretary and Treasurer. As important as these jobs were, they do not give the true significance of his multiple roles and contributions to the subsequent success of the business. Fred's brother-in-law, George Merryweather, described the first years of Fred's association with the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company in these words:

> In the front of the [one room] shop was a high desk where the Manager, Bookkeeper, Salesman, Correspondent, Office Boy, etc. very willingly took the cash, and the whole office force signed under the Paid Stamp "F.A. Geier."[11]

If Fred Geier was practically the entire office staff, the company president Fred Holz deserves much credit for designing and building the machines. He was the production problem solver who it is said would wake up nights with ideas on how to build milling machines to fill specific needs. A fine mechanic but not a businessman. Fred Holz, the engineer, mechanic and production man, nicely complemented Fred Geier, who handled the commercial side of the business. They both shared the Protestant work ethic. If Fred Holz sometimes returned to the shop in the middle of the night to work on an inspiration, Fred Geier sometimes seemed to have never left. Edward "Bud" Sands related his observations on the occasion of Fred A. Geier's 54th birthday party in 1920:

> My idea is that the basis for the success of the new company was Mr. Geier's hard work, his foresight and his business ability. He was down at the office night after night at Second and Plum, and also later on Spring Grove Avenue. He worked hard and never just sat down and looked wise. He had a lot of nerve and always knew just what he was doing.

Hard work, indeed, was the lot of most workingmen. The 1890s were a time of ten hour days, 60-hour weeks, and no summer vacations.

Even Geier's associates marvelled at the pleasure Fred took in making a sale and taking an order. An officer of an eastern distributor, the Prentiss Tool & Supply Company, recalled coming to the Geier residence for Sunday dinner in January, 1897. Of that occasion he wrote:

> At that time our dear old friend Wood [Walter] was living with you, and the writer recalls coming to your house about 10:30 in the morning and you were all busy going over the mail you had just received; never having seen business mail received on a Sunday morning before it was quite a novelty; I mentioned the fact and you stated that you had done this every Sunday

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[11] George E. Merryweather, A testimonial letter, 15 June 1916, prepared for the 50th birthday of Fred A. Geier. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

morning for a long time as you did not wish to wait until Monday to see if you had received any orders.[12]

It was not all work, however, for the officers of the Mill. At times lack of orders, due to external factors, caused Holz and Geier to remain at their stations pretending to be busy. This is especially true at times during the Panic of 1893. But even in more normal periods there were moments for relaxation during these early years in the Mill's history. Robert Crane, the C.M.M.C.'s first travelling sales and service representative, made the following observation:

> I recall too that in the early days of the business, we quite frequently in the late afternoon, while the mail was being finished by faithful Miss Luecke, took a little recreation across the street and Mr. Geier always bowled a good score. We also found time occasionally for a ball game but how different things are now.[13]

Fred Geier was also fond of excursions and vacations even though some of his wanderings had at least some relationship to business. There were occasions when these jaunts were used to recruit family members into joining the business. Dr. Otto P. Geier recalled that in the winter of 1911 his big brother took him to the South for golf and for Fred's health. "That three weeks of Mardi Gras and winter golf qualified me for business."

Brother-in-law George Mayer joined the Mill in 1895 (although he had been a director since 1891) when Vice President Frederick Luecke retired for health reasons and sold his approximate one-third interest in the company. Mayer noted that to consummate the deal must have been somewhat strenuous even for someone with the stamina of Fred Geier, for he next proposed that Mayer join him on a vacation. Mayer related:

> During the month of July Fred and I started on, what for us at that time, was a real tour—Niagara Falls, down the St. Lawrence to Montreal, through the White Mountains to Boston, then to New York and home again. Several incidents of that trip will never be forgotten but space forbids mention here.[14]

THE ESSELBORNS

Excursions, business expansion and philanthropic pursuits were no substitute for the family life lost when Amanda Geier died in 1898. Fred Geier's time of private loneliness ended late in the fall of 1902 when he met Juliet Esselborn. The occasion of their meeting, according to Juliet's diary, was the wedding of Dr. Frank Mott Edwards to Marjorie Franklin in Portsmouth, Ohio. Juliet's brother, Paul Esselborn, was the best man.

Juliet Esselborn was the granddaughter of Dr. Louis Rehfuss and Catherine Frank Rehfuss. Dr. Rehfuss, who received a medical degree at the University of Tuebingen before

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[12] Lou [Last name unknown], A testimonial letter, 1916, prepared for the 50th birthday of Fred A. Geier. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[13] Robert L. Crane, A testimonial letter, dated 8 June 1916, prepared for the 50th birthday of Fred A. Geier. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[14] George A. Mayer, A testimonial letter, 1916, prepared for the 50th birthday of Fred A. Geier. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

turning his attention to chemistry, was a leader in Cincinnati's German-American and cultural community. Among his noteworthy achievements were the introduction of the first Christmas tree to Cincinnati and the organization of the original Cincinnati orchestra. Dr. Rehfuss sent to Germany for the necessary instruments and music.

According to his biographical sketch in Lewis Alexander Leonard's *Greater Cincinnati and Its People*, "It was also largely due to his influence that the study of the German language was added to the curriculum of the public schools of Cincinnati."

Dr. and Mrs. Rehfuss had four children, one of whom was Pauline who married Julius Esselborn on 9 August 1870 at St. John's Church in Cincinnati. Juliet's father, Julius Esselborn, was born in Duerkheim, Palatinate, Germany. He emigrated to New York City in 1850 and moved westward to Cincinnati shortly after the Civil War. In 1889 he moved to Portsmouth, Ohio, where he lived until his death on 6 May 1900.

On 23 February 1899 Julius purchased the Portsmouth brewery of Conrad Gerlach and associated himself in this business with Oscar Knorr. The brewery was considered to be the best of its kind in the Portsmouth area. Nelson W. Evans' *A History of Scioto County, Ohio* (1903) contains the following summary of Juliet Esselborn's father:

> He was a progressive man. He was always ready to do his share in public enterprises and more than his share, in fact. He was honorable and upright in all his business dealings and was respected and esteemed by those with whom he came in contact. He was a man of loveable character and he had the sincere affection of the circle of friends who knew him best and appreciated him as a cultured, refined and kindly gentleman.[15]

Juliet Esselborn was born in Cincinnati on 2 September 1875. Her childhood was one of comfort, advantage, politics and culture. The household was filled with family, relatives and friends. In 1885 she, her sister Laura, and her brother Paul attended school in the Cincinnati area community of Tusculum. But a family diary reveals tutors were also employed. Juliet received private lessons in the violin, German and Italian.

It was a childhood of church lawn fetes, pet chickens, New Years' Eve tableaux, riding parties and May festivals. Her diary entry of New Year's Day 1895 reads, "Dancing, Burnet Woods, crack the whip in snow, sleigh ride, etc." A young lady with such varied interests and considerable energy was likely to attract a like-minded eligible beau.

A MOMENTOUS POLTER ABEND

Another event later in the year became a highlight of Juliet Esselborn's life and a remarkable happening on the Cincinnati social scene. The event was the *Polter Abend* that preceded the wedding of Howard Eugene Wurlitzer and Helene Billing. It would prove to be a significant occasion, too, in the life of Fred Geier. A *Polter Abend* is an old German custom, dating from the Middle Ages, of celebrating the day prior to a wedding. It is the last day of merrymaking before a lifetime of matrimony. It is at the *Polter Abend* that friends and relatives of the bride and groom assemble to pay their respects and to bring gifts.

The event was recorded in great detail in the Cincinnati press. The *Cincinnati Tribune* reported, "Never has there been such a nuptial celebration in Cincinnati as that which took

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[15] Nelson W. Evans, *A History of Scioto County, Ohio, together with a Pioneer Record of Southern Ohio* (Nelson W. Evans, Portsmouth, OH) p. 971.

place in the auditorium of the new Odd Fellows Temple last night in anticipation of the Wurlitzer-Billing wedding."

As the guests arrived they signed their names in the vellum-bound marriage record that was designed and painted by the bride-groom's uncle, the famed Western artist Henry Farny. A wedding march was composed for the occasion. The bride and groom-elect were then seated on a dais where they would watch an elaborate and authentic entertainment. An elaborate pageant complete with processions of harlequins and pages began the evening. This was followed by a procession of bridesmaids bearing gifts which represented the varied phases of married life the bride was about to enter. It is said that the present custom of wedding gifts originated from this old Germanic custom. The bridesmaids, all dressed in medieval costume, were: Misses Leonie Wurlitzer, Alma Doepke, Elsie Tafel, Clara Besunden and Juliet Esselborn.

Processors represented the ancestral homelands of Howard Wurlitzer's grandmother, France, and his father, Germany, as well as America. The procession was occasionally interrupted by performances of Grimm Brothers' fairy tales and folk dances. The first part of the evening concluded with a *Faekeltanz*, a ceremonial dance performed at State occasions in Germany.

It was to the music of Wagner's *Tannhauser* that the guests marched to supper behind ushers carrying torches. The chef of the St. Nicholas Hotel had been ordered "to do his best" for the 250 guests. The wedding cake at the bridal table was decorated with the American eagle and shield. An orchestra played for dancing and toasts were made. Following an elaborate repast a lantern-slide show was presented that gave scenes in the lives of Howard and Helene, from their childhood through their courtship. Late twentieth century audio-visual presentations at wedding receptions quite possibly had their roots in the Gay Nineties.

According to oral history in the Geier family, recalled by Virginia Geier McCurdy among others, Fred A. Geier and Juliet Esselborn first became acquainted at the *Polter Abend.* Helene Billing Wurlitzer's biography, *The Lady of the Casa,* published in 1959, noted that the Geier-Wurlitzer friendship was then in its fifth generation. And the Geier family in 1895 was a neighbor, perhaps the next-door neighbor, to the Billing family on University Court.

Juliet's diary, however, contains another account of their acquaintanceship. Her diary entries, it must be noted, were both concise and cryptic. They were not intended to inform those who were not in the family and in the know. One significant entry reads, "J.(uliet) meets Fritz late in Fall—same day Marjorie Franklin married—Dr. Edwards. P.(aul Esselborn) best man." The year is 1902 and records from Portsmouth, Ohio, reveal that Marjorie Franklin, 24, and the daughter of a deceased rector of Christ Episcopal parish, married U.S. Army physician James F. Edwards, 31, on 16 December 1902. That December date is certainly "late in fall" and Paul Esselborn was the best man. Dr. James F. Edwards was one of the bride's brother's college friends. It is not known who Fred Geier knew that resulted in his being at the wedding.

MARRIAGE TO JULIET

Less than a year after the Edwards-Franklin nuptials, Fred and Juliet were married. Given the prominence of the groom, whom the *Cincinnati Enquirer* described as "a prominent manufacturer of this city and a leading member of the Business Men's Club, as well as the stature of the bride's family, it seems surprising that the nuptials received so little notice in the society pages of Cincinnati newspapers. This may have been because it was a second wedding for the groom. And, at the time, German-American families were not considered by some to be the cream of society. More likely it may have been a preference by the families

Dear Sweetheart. How do you
like our new automobile.
It is made out of paper and
we only had it for a few minutes.
These pictures were taken by electric
light and we dont look quite as
bad as the picture make out.

Photo taken during honeymoon trip while in Berlin.

to keep this important occasion somewhat low-key and private. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* published an account of Fred Geier's farewell bachelor dinner, which was held at the Business Men's Club on Friday 20 November 1903. J. E. Taylor of the American Leather Company was toastmaster at the occasion, which 25 relatives, business and professional associates attended.[16]

The wedding took place at the home of Juliet's mother, Mrs. Pauline Esselborn, at 135 Gallia Street in Portsmouth at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday 24 November 1903. Brother-in-law Joseph Henry Cone was again called to read the service, as he had officiated at the wedding of Fred and Amanda more than a decade earlier. Juliet's diary records that "smilax, white and yellow chrysanthemums" were used in the floral decorations. The bride carried a bouquet of white violets and white orchids. In the wedding party were her sister, Laura Esselborn, and her brother, Paul Esselborn.

Perhaps the most interesting of the nuptial arrangements concerned the music. The wedding march from Wagner's *Lohengrin* was sung by four of Fred's siblings: Walter Geier, Philip O. Geier, Louise Geier and Norma Geier. The society page account of the wedding in the *Portsmouth Daily Times* concluded, "The unavoidable absence of Mrs. [Emilie] Crane and young baby Paul was much regretted by all present at this ideal home wedding."

Fred and Juliet departed from Portsmouth that evening by train for New York City, where they sailed to Europe aboard the *S. S. Irene*. They would spend the winter in Italy with Christmas in Palermo. Their itinerary included the Azores, Pompei, Amalfi, Sorento, Capri and Naples. They journeyed to northern Italy and Germany. The five-month trip abroad may not have been a complete break from business, as it is recorded that Fred made trips to London, Cologne and Paris, while Juliet remained in Wiesbaden. These trips were likely made to European distributors of the company's lines. The wedding pair returned to Cincinnati and Portsmouth in early May 1904.

Marriage brought stability to Fred Geier's family life. Even before the marriage in 1903, he had moved his family to a Victorian farmhouse at 2301 Grandview Avenue. This Walnut Hills site had been the home of Henry L. Kemper, a member of a pioneer Cincinnati family. The home commanded, as the street name indicated, an excellent view of the Ohio River at the foot of the hill. Soon other family members built or bought houses on Grandview Avenue and adjacent East McMillan Street. The curving hillside area off East McMillan was referred to by some as "Geier Circle," even though it also was the home of in-laws, the Mayers and Tangemans. An unofficial name for Grandview Avenue was Geier *Reihe* (Geier Row). The homes of family members comprised what undoubtedly was the closest thing to a family compound in Cincinnati.

By his marriage to Juliet Esselborn, Fred Geier insured his three children even more aunts, uncles and cousins. A long holiday period, such as Christmas, might well find the Fred A. Geier family celebrating Christmas Eve with various Mayers, Tangemans and Ottens at Grandview and then traveling to Portsmouth on Christmas day to share in festivities with the Esselborns.

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[16] Attending the farewell dinner at the Cincinnati Business Men's Club, were in addition to toastmaster Taylor: C. H. M. Atkins, E. M. Chace, H. T. Atkins, Rev. J. H. Cone, Dr. Crawford, E. F. DeBrul, Paul Esselborn, A. Feuser, Fred A. Geier, Walter Geier, H. C. Hoeffinghoff, Fred Holz, F. M. Huschart, Charles Lugan, G. A. Mayer, J. C. Miller, Fred Morton, George Puchta, A. W. Schwill, Hans Scitz, Ed. E. S. Shipley, J. F. Taylor, August H. Tuechter, C. Wood Walter, and Louis Walter.

Pictured from the left, Front row: Frederick V. Geier, Willard Crane and Virginia Geier; Second row kneeling: Pauline Esselborn, Virginia Esselborn and Helen Geier; Third row standing: Paul Esselborn, Laura Esselborn Merryweather, Margaret Downing Esselborn, Louis Rehfuss, Juliet Esselborn Geier, George Merryweather, Emilie Esselborn Crane, Emily Rehfuss and Fred A. Geier.

FAMILY LIFE

The appropriate schooling for Frederick V. Geier, Helen and Virginia was a matter in which both Fred and Juliet were interested. Frederick was enrolled at the Franklin School, a college preparatory school for boys located on May Street in Walnut Hills. The school, founded in 1881, was famous for its high academic standards and competitive athletic teams. During its almost half-century of existence, it prepared more boys for Harvard, Yale and Princeton than any other preparatory school in Ohio.[17]

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[17] Franklin School boasted both a distinguished faculty and prominent alumni. It attracted a large number of the sons of prominent Queen City families. Nicholas Longworth, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, was a member of the Class of 1884 and perhaps the school's most distinguished graduate. It was written that its alumni list read like a *Who's Who* not only for Cincinnati, but for the nation as well. In the school's final years it was located in Indian Hill, Ohio. The school was originally known as the

Frederick V. Geier also was afflicted with what was diagnosed as heart trouble in early 1910 and, perhaps, underwent an operation at the time. His Franklin School classmate, Herbert Koch, wrote in his diary on 16 April that Frederick had an operation recently and was still in bed.

After Fred and Juliet's marriage there were more frequent visits to family members as well as numerous vacations. The Esselborns were still residing in Portsmouth. And, on 21 December 1908, George Merryweather married Juliet's younger sister, Laura. George Merryweather was based in Cleveland. Thus, yearly trips were made to northern Ohio.

Unlike many wealthy Americans, the Geiers did not return to the same vacation spot year in, year out. One of the first family vacations, remembered years afterward, was an August holiday in 1907 to Wequetonsing, Michigan. Emilie Crane and her son Willard accompanied the Geier family.[18] It was at Wequetonsing that young Willard was fascinated by tame chipmunks and the lake steamers that occasionally docked nearby bringing vacationers from Chicago to the Little Traverse Bay summer resorts.

The spas of Virginia, especially Warm Springs and Hot Springs, were favorite watering holes for the Geiers in these early years of the century, and again, after World War I. In the latter period Fred, Juliet and son Paul went to Warm Springs for summer vacations and lodged at a small inn operated by author Mary Johnson, a woman they greatly admired, who is best known for her romance novels. Warm Springs was a spot for quiet relaxation, for sitting and rocking on the porch. But for a change of pace, the famed Homestead Hotel was nearby. Here one could play golf on fabulous courses and dine and be entertained regally.

The summer vacation of 1910 appeared to be especially memorable and certainly anticipated. Earlier that year Juliet had been ill, Fred was hospitalized, and both Frederick and Virginia had symptoms of a heart condition. Perhaps feeling that the sea air would be recuperative, the Fred Geier family vacationed at York Cliffs, Maine. There they were joined by George and Laura Merryweather. On at least one occasion they all feasted at a sea-side clam bake. Mrs. Henrietta Billing and the Howard Wurlitzer family were also at York Cliffs that summer.

There was time for sightseeing, too, as the Geiers motored the length of Massachusetts. They visited Salem, Boston, Lexington, Concord, Stockbridge, North Adams, Williamstown and Lebanon, New Hampshire. It is likely that it was on this vacation that Frederick V. Geier was first attracted to Williams College. It would be the beginning of a continuing family association with colleges and other institutions in western Massachusetts. The Geiers would stop and visit the Merryweathers in Cleveland en route home.

Prior to 1907, family travel was primarily by train or ocean liner. Sometime in early 1907 Fred A. Geier purchased his first automobile. It was a Stevens-Duryea, a large, conservative, high-quality touring car built in Massachusetts. It was, in a sense, a Mill car in

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White & Sykes Academy, after two of its distinguished headmasters, but the name was later changed to the Franklin School. The school name honored Benjamin Franklin who is generally recognized as the first great American man of letters.

[18] Emilie Esselborn Crane, the youngest sister of Juliet Geier, was born in 1872 and, in 1902, married Dr. William Henry Crane. The Cranes only child was P. Willard Crane who would later become the Mill's executive director of research, a vice president, and a member of the board of directors. Emilie Crane was an 1893 graduate of the University of Cincinnati where she would later teach history and be an instructor in French. Before her marriage she was the University's first dean of women. Doctor Crane's untimely death in 1906 resulted in Emilie and her son becoming almost members of the Fred A. Geier household.

Prior to 1907, family travel was primarily by train or ocean liner. Sometime in early 1907 Fred A. Geier purchased his first automobile. It was a Stevens-Duryea, a large, conservative, high-quality touring car built in Massachusetts. It was, in a sense, a Mill car in that it was used to take visitors to the plant and company officers to downtown lunches and appointments. One of Fred Geier's regular destinations was to the Hotel Sinton's barber shop.

It is likely that the car had a closed passenger compartment and an open seat for the chauffeur. In later years he always left the driving to others. At some time his vision in one eye deteriorated to the point that he was nearly bind. Younger family members, who knew him only after the vision in that eye had failed, believed that he never drove an automobile. On the contrary, he was quite an automobile enthusiast in those early days of motoring. During June 1907 he and Juliet drove to Portsmouth, Ohio. Later in the summer, he made an even longer journey to Ironton, Ohio. The local newspaper found his arrival noteworthy enough to merit a four-paragraph story under a headline that read "Mr. Geier Drove His Machine From Cincinnati to Ironton."[19] At this time while paved, improved streets might be found in some municipalities long distance travel on unimproved country roads was only for the adventuresome.

The car was also utilized for picnics and family outings. Willard Crane recalled that on one trip to Venice (now Ross), Ohio, three flat tires were experienced. In 1908 the car was driven again to Portsmouth. George Merryweather volunteered to drive Fred and son Frederick back to Cincinnati. George had a penchant for discovering the shortest—but not always the best—routes. The southern Ohio roads proved to be almost impassable and George Merryweather's muscles were mightily exercised in getting over and around some of the obstacles.

Driving in such demanding road conditions would wear out even a high-quality automobile. And around 1911 the Stevens-Duryea was replaced with another quality car, this time a heavy Peerless built in Cleveland. The car had two bodies, one for summer and one for winter, that were changed in the spring and fall.

The Peerless would receive a real road test during the Fred Geier family vacation in 1912. The family was going to one of Juliet's favorite spots, the Whitehall Inn in Camden, Maine. The Geier men and Helen were being driven there in the Peerless. Juliet and Virginia elected to travel by more proven and comfortable means. Juliet's mother, her sister Emilie and Willard would join the family motorists in Maine. Before the return trip to Ohio one of the men decided that the Peerless motor should have the carbon removed and the pistons and rings checked. Willard Crane recalled:

> The chauffeur and young Frederick did most of the work. I enjoyed scraping the carbon from the head and other parts. I felt I was a real mechanic when my hands and arms were practically black. I thought this was great, but my mother disagreed. The motor ran beautifully on the way home.[20]

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[19] Fred Geier's trip to Ironton was his first visit there in 14 years. He journeyed there to visit Dr. Otto Otten, the uncle he clerked for the summer after graduating from Woodward High School. Juliet motored with her husband as far as Portsmouth while a sister-in-law accompanied him on his day trip to Ironton. "Mr. Geier Drive His Machine From Cincinnati to Ironton," *Semi-Weekly Irontonian*, 6 August 1907, p. 3.

[20] "Further Recollections of Frederick A. Geier—November, 1991," P. Willard Crane letter to James E. Schwartz.

Mechanical operations and technology had infected still another generation of Geier family members. But, in Frederick V. Geier's case such an interest might have seemed unusual, for his interests at Franklin School revolved around literary and dramatic activities. And, that summer in Maine, the women in the family chronicled a literary event at the Whitehall Inn that they were privileged to attend. For it was on a warm August evening in a parlor at the inn that the young Edna St. Vincent Millay first recited her poem "Renascence." It would become one of her best-known and most highly acclaimed works. The parlor at the Whitehall today contains many volumes of her poems and other memorabilia pertaining to her life and times. It has been designated as the Edna St. Vincent Millay Room.

While summer vacations saw the Geiers throughout Europe and across the East and Upper Mid-West, the Fred Geier family was always home at Grandview for at least a portion of Christmas and New Years. Without doubt Christmas was the most memorable of all holidays. The Christmas tree was lit with candles and decorated with handmade glass ornaments brought from Germany. During the holiday in 1910, and perhaps other years as well, the Grandview home was adorned with four Christmas trees. The trees made a lasting impression on Frederick's Franklin School classmate Herbert Koch. He noted that the one large tree had colored ornaments, while the three smaller trees were differently trimmed in either all gold ornaments, all silver ornaments, or snow-flocked. Making an even profounder impression on visitors, surrounding the base of the big tree was an elaborate village display that featured a castle on a cliff. There were fountains, a pond mill and a merry-go-around. They were all animated by water power.

There were both cultural and familial reasons for highlighting the Christmas tree during the Geiers' holiday observances. Juliet's maternal grandfather, Dr. Louis Rehfuss, had been credited with introducing the first Christmas tree to Cincinnati sometime after 1835. A sentence from a biographical sketch of Dr. Rehfuss reads, "Coming from the land where the Christmas festivities are most picturesque and where music is considered not one of the pleasures of life but one of the necessities, he brought with him to his new home this spirit of his Fatherland, setting up Cincinnati's first *Tannenbaum* and organizing the Queen City's first orchestra, sending across the seas to Germany for the necessary instruments and music."[21]

Some Christmas Eves there were visits to the Children's Home. And on several of these holidays at Grandview there were children's tableaux and skits. There was always time set aside to sing German carols. Among Fred Geier's favorites were: "*Oh Tannenbaum,*" Martin Luther's "*Vom Himmel hoch,*" "*Es ist ein Ros entsprungen,*" "*Ihr Kinderlein, Kommet,*" "*Alle Jahre wieder,*" and "*O du froehliche, o du selige.*"

Other family occasions were also very important, even if not quite so memorable, recalled Willard Crane, who spent periods of his childhood living at the Geier's home on Grandview. Both Fred and Juliet were skillful carvers and at Thanksgiving both would wield knives to quickly dispatch the turkeys. Given the number assembled at this feast, to do otherwise would mean a long wait for the meal to begin.

New Year's Eve parties were also a frequent celebration at Grandview, although these gatherings were sometimes only for the grown-ups. Those invited were generally members of the extended family, along with close friends such as Robert and Agnes Hochstetter. Shadow plays and comic operas were performed at the house or everyone would go out for an evening at the theater and the club.

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[21] Lewis Alexander Leonard, *Greater Cincinnati and Its People: A History* (Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., New York, Chicago, and Cincinnati) p. 684.

While New Year's Eve, or *Sylvester Abend* as it was often referred to within the family, was generally a grown-up celebration, Easter was a children's holiday with an emphasis on youthful fun and play. The Easter bunny and splendidly colored eggs, ideas brought to America by Germans, were the featured attraction. German-American children were told that on the eve of Easter, and only then, rabbits laid eggs and children must go outside and find them. Often German organizations, including the churches, sponsored Easter egg hunts. And there were egg-rolling contests on the Geier lawns at Grandview. "It was a good place to hide eggs," Crane added.

Home was the center for holiday observances. Throughout the years it was here that so many engagements were announced, weddings solemnized, birthdays celebrated and funerals conducted. For the Geier family, fun and recreation were not limited to these major dates and events. Weekends, especially Sundays, were meant for relaxation. Fred always ate Saturday lunch at the City Club during this period in his life and it was here that municipal matters were pondered. Sunday afternoons were dedicated to naps, family visits and string trios and quartets played by various musically gifted Esselborns. In winter when there was snow, the children fashioned skis out of barrel staves and tested the hillside slopes. After Sunday supper, which was always a cold buffet, Fred liked nothing better than to play "Sniff," a dominoes game, and to smoke expensive Cuban cigars. Partagas was the brand that he always had at hand.

The decade following Fred A. Geier's marriage to Juliet Esselborn was in many ways the most active period in Fred's life. It was a time of moving the Mill to the Oakley Factory Colony; of political activity on behalf of President Taft and in defense of high tariffs; of leadership in municipal reform and welfare capitalism; and of service on behalf of various charities, trade associations and educational institutions.

PROHIBITION BREWS

One of the issues of the day, that of the battle of the "wets" and "drys" over prohibition and temperance, would directly touch the family. Willard Crane recalled that there was little drinking at Grandview, saying, "The only hard liquor I ever saw in the house was a bottle of bourbon in a dining room cabinet which went untouched for a number of years." He recalled that only white wine was served at festive family and business dinners.

But both the Geiers and the Esselborns had business connections with the alcohol industry. Fred's father, Philip, and uncle, Jacob Geier, produced bungs (stoppers) for beer barrels. Indeed, by 1878 Uncle Jacob's shop was turning out 15,000 to 20,000 bungs a day. He had earned his nickname of "Spunden-Geier" (bung-Geier). Fred A. Geier's first non-machine tool directorship was at the German National Bank in Cincinnati. This financial institution was led by some of Cincinnati's German-American brewers, most notably the Haucks.

To the Esselborns the prohibition struggle was far more than a matter of philosophy, although it was that too. It directly touched the family's livelihood. In 1845 Juliet's grandfather, Dr. Rehfuss, bought a tract of land and dedicated himself to the scientific culture of grapes. He became one of the foremost horticulturists of Hamilton County and was an expert on grape fermentation. At one time he was president of the Wine Growers' Association.

Juliet's father, Julius Esselborn, operated a brewery in Portsmouth, Ohio. Her brother, Paul Esselborn, worked at the Cincinnati Brewing Company in Hamilton, Ohio, for six months in 1895 and the following year continued his labors in Munich. Late in 1896 he returned to Portsmouth, where he became the brewmaster at the family business, The

Portsmouth Brewery and Ice Company. He became a director and the treasurer of the brewery shortly before his father's death on 6 May 1900. By 1908 Paul had been elected President of the Ohio Brewers Association.

Citizens took their beer drinking seriously in late nineteenth century German Cincinnati. On the average every man, woman and child consumed 40 gallons a year—more than double the national average. Prohibitionists were more of a nuisance than a threat in the Queen City. However, up the Ohio River in Portsmouth, the Bible Belt drys had considerably more strength. The first local option elections on 27-29 July 1904 resulted in a victory for the wets.

But a few years later on 28 September 1908 Scioto County voted dry. While the victory of the Portsmouth drys did not prohibit the brewing of beer, it did curtail sales in its home and, presumably, major market. On 8 March 1910 Juliet's aunt, Miss Emily Rehfuss, told Herbert Koch's father (the families were related) how the prohibition campaign was hurting them and that the vice-president of the Prohibition League lived right in Portsmouth, Ohio. Miss Rehfuss further observed, "The Methodists are the worst and the majority of them are hypocrites."

Another hard campaign (Juliet described it as the "Tent and Tabernacle" campaign) was fought in 1911 and Portsmouth was again wet. In 1913 the capacity of the Portsmouth Brewery was increased.

The dawning of World War I, and within a few years national prohibition, would see the disappearance of the Esselborns from Portsmouth. By 1914 both of Juliet's sisters, Emilie and Laura, had married and moved away. The Esselborn family home at 135 Gallia Street was sold in 1914. Only Paul Esselborn and the Portsmouth Brewery remained. And the Eighteenth Amendment, which went into effect in 1920, would see the business closed. Around 1917 Paul Esselborn and his family moved to Cincinnati. The Portsmouth Brewery and Ice Company plant, however, still stands at the west end of Second Street in Portsmouth. It is now known as the Brewery Arcade and houses several specialty shops and a Greyhound Bus Station.

MILESTONES

Fred A. Geier celebrated three important anniversaries during this period. On 13 September 1912 there was a dinner honoring his 25 years with The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company and the former Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company. The Friday evening celebration was attended by friends and business associates. The guest list was a veritable "who's who" of the early Cincinnati machine tool industry and it is unlikely such a noteworthy industry group had ever been assembled.[22] The Cincinnati *Commercial Tribune* reported that "Toasts appropriate to the occasion were responded to by a number of the guests, and with this the good cheer of the company contributed largely to the pleasure of the

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[22] The following is the guest list for the occasion: Ernst Krause of Vienna, F. W. Jaeger of New York, C. Wood Walter, A. L. DeLeeuw, C. S. Gingrich, E. M. Chase, Philip O. Geier, H. M. Ramp, A. H. Tuechter, Sherman Schauer, B. B. Quillen, J. C. Hobart, Perrin G. March, Murray Shipley, William Lodge, Dr. Otto P. Geier, H. T. Atkins, George Puchta, Fred Holz, Sr., Louis S. Levi, Prof. Herman Schneider, Louis J. Hauck, James P. Orr, George Bohrer, George D. Crabbs, Prof. F. C. Hicks, Dr. J. M. Withrow, Nelson W. Strobridge, Robert Hochstetter, Albert Marshall of Chicago, George F. Merryweather of Cleveland, E. F. DuBrul, Dr. C. W. Tangeman, Albert Bettinger, Lewis N. Gatch, Frederick V. Geier, George H. Kattenborn.

evening." Juliet Geier was seated at her husband's side, the only woman present at this otherwise all-male affair.

Fred's 50th birthday was celebrated with a party on 23 June 1916. He was presented with a leather-bound book containing tributes from 31 of his close associates. Willard Crane would note that his Uncle Fred made his usual fine speech that day. But the only substance that he recalled, nearly 75 years later, was that his uncle had been to the dentist the day before. The dentist had told Fred that his teeth should last for nearly another half-century. Thus, Fred announced that "he could enjoy the dinner even more."

THE COMMERCIAL TRIBUNE, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1912.

Twenty-Five Years in Business, Geier Is Honored by His Friends

DINNER PARTY IN HONOR OF FRE DERICK A. GEIER.

Fred's 53rd birthday party in 1919 was, at least in the number of guests, even grander. The birthday held in his honor at the Cincinnati Zoo by Mill employees was described in the press as the biggest bash in Cincinnati history.

The years preceding America's entry into World War I were the time when Frederick, Helen and Virginia grew into adulthood. In the fall of 1912 Frederick entered Williams College in Massachusetts, where he pledged Zeta Psi fraternity. Helen had graduated from Miss Doherty's College Preparatory School for Girls in 1913. Miss Mary Doherty's school pioneered in training girls for college education and Latin and Greek headed the classical

curriculum. Helen would then enter Vasser College in Pougkeepsie, New York. Virginia's delicate health, especially her heart condition, precluded her enrollment in a rigorous academic program. But she was busy nevertheless. During 1913 she began both golf lessons and evening dance class.

Dancing was an activity the whole family enjoyed. Frederick and Virginia both became accomplished dancers. One of Juliet's diary entries in 1914 reveals that both she and Fred were in a dance class.

Helen was back in Cincinnati during the Christmas holidays of 1915 (it was during her sophomore year) to make her debut. The *Enquirer* in its account of the tea and dinner dance printed the following about the debutante:

> She is dark haired and dark eyed, her love of riding, tennis and golf and interest in music give her face a certain character. She was a member of the Vasser hockey team and is a great favorite of her associates there.[23]

On 20 December 1915, 300 came to pay their respects to the debutante and many also offered congratulations to Frederick Geier. Earlier that day news was received from the East that "Fritz" had been made class orator of the senior year at Williams.

There was a somewhat surprising change in the Geier household at the time when Frederick, Helen and Virginia were growing into adulthood. On 19 November 1914, Paul Esselborn Geier was born. Frederick V. Geier was already half-way through his college years and was dating Amey Massey Develin. When Frederick hosted a dinner party for his Zeta Psi fraternity brothers, it was conjectured that it would be to announce his engagement to Amey. Instead, he announced the birth of a brother. Paul Geier, even in the eyes of outsiders, was described as an "adorable" baby who grew to be a handsome boy.[24]

The Geier family New Year's Eve party in 1916 saw the ringing out of the old and the ringing in of the new in more than one way. It would be the last peacetime New Year's Eve for several years. And new characters, who would become important names in the Geier family chronicle and The Cincinnati Milling Machine Tool direction, were now being introduced to a wider circle within the family and the Queen City community.

Again, Herbert Koch's diaries capture much of the flavor of the Geier's holiday observances as well as some curious customs. The diaries also anticipate future developments. Koch's 31 December 1916 entry reads:

> "Then rode over to Crane's home on Grandview Ave., as Mrs. Emily Crane is giving an informal little party for Frederick Geier and his houseguests...There is here Mrs. Esselborn, Miss Emily Crane, Miss Leonie

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[23] "In Society", *Cincinnati Enquirer,* 21 December 1915, p. 5.

[24] For some time it had appeared as if Fred A. Geier would be the only one of Philip and Louise Geier's four sons who would marry. However, on 15 November 1913 Philip O. Geier married Gladys Jones of Kansas City. Gladys's mother, Marie Werk Jones, was a close friend of the Esselborns and was a bridesmaid in the wedding of Pauline Rehfuss to Julius Esselborn on 9 August 1870. And while it is commonly believed that Walter Geier was a life-long bachelor, it is recorded that he married Carol Perrenot on 29 July 1916 at the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati. That marriage was dissolved at least by 1922 as Carol Perrenot Geier married Paul Longone in June of that year. Dr. Otto P. Geier married Miss Rosa Ingeborg "Inge" Hacker, a native of Austria, in 1926. They had met while both were on holiday at Ragusa (now Dubrovnik) on the Adriatic Sea. The previous year Doctor Geier had been appointed to a League of Nations's committee to study living and working conditions in foreign countries. Miss Hacker was a student at a convent school in Graz, Austria.

Frank, a gay, garrulous old lady of whom I have heard very much but whom I have never met. Mr. and Mrs. Fred Geier, Emily Rehfuss and Louis Rehfuss. We chatted, admired the tree and the metal 'schloss'—like a German village with a fountain, waterfall. Others came. There was Mr. and Mrs. Merryweather of Cleveland (Mrs. I used to know as a Miss Esselborn).

"Also Fritz Geier: his guests a Mr. Flint, who they call 'Stubbs', a law student from Williams; Mr. Post, a tall, spectacled serious minded youth from Princeton, who talks with a marked English accent and a Miss Devlin of Philadelphia with whom Fritz is quite obviously smitten. Also there is Virginia and Helen Geier and Anglela Loveland whom I have met before...."

The party, which Koch commented was "very comfortable" featured a cold buffet, games, charades and songs sung standing around the Christmas tree. Most of the guests also accomplished, with some difficulty, a custom Mrs. Crane observed. The hostess explained that it was held that if you write a wish on New Year's Eve while the clock was striking 12, burn the paper, throw it in water and drink the ashes before the clock stops striking, the wish will come true. She then distributed tissues on which to write and a candle and glasses of water.

The "burning of the wishes" actually occurred earlier in the evening as the party broke up at 11.15 p.m. because Mrs. Esselborn could not stay up so late. Frederick took several of the guests, including Herb Koch, home in his automobile. As Frederick drove all sang "Poor Butterfly," "Babes in the Woods" and other tunes of the time. For the Geiers, 1916 ended with the sounds of songs as well as the usual noise of bells, whistles and gunshots.

WORLD WAR I

America would hear a great many more gunshots in the New Year as war was declared against Germany. That conflict had started earlier, and Fred Geier had returned to America from Europe just in time, as he sailed westward on 1 August 1914. The "Guns of August" would soon roar, and German Cincinnati and the Old World would begin to experience unalterable changes. Fred Geier's sailing home also marked the last entry in Juliet's diary, which began with notations about her parents' marriage on 9 August 1870.

At the Mill the directors first feared that the war would be bad for business and they voted to omit the quarterly dividend in October 1914. They were mistaken; business would never be better. By November, each day's mail brought new orders from Charles Churchill, the company's distributor in England. The French government started buying during December and the Russians shortly afterward in January. It was the start of a wave of orders, increased production and mounting profits.

While patriotism was the order of the day when America entered the war, and the Mill responded magnificently to Liberty Bond drives and other war-time campaigns, it is not easy to gauge the impact of the war on the Geier family. Within the immediate household only Frederick was eligible for the draft. He enlisted and spent two years as a U.S. Army sergeant in Ordnance. He was based in nearby Hamilton, Ohio, where the Mosler Safe Company was producing military supplies and weapons parts.

Fred A. Geier had actively pursued assimilation into American mainstream as early as 1888 when he transferred to the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church from the Zion German Evangelical Church congregation in "Over-the-Rhine." But various Geier and Otten uncles, aunts and cousins remained at the German-language Zion Church until its end in the 1930s. Fred's mother's sister, Mrs. Betty Ahlers, served as president of the Ladies Aid Society almost continuously from 1904 until 1914.

It must have been unsettling when the Board of Education eliminated German-language instruction in the elementary grades of Cincinnati's public schools. It had been largely due to Juliet's grandfather, Dr. Louis Rehfuss, that the study of German had been added to the public school curriculum.

There is little question that in the months and years leading up to the declaration of war against Germany many of the Geiers' friends favored the German cause—or at least opposed intervention on behalf of England. Jacob Schmidlapp declined to attend a Commercial Club talk on preparedness. He did not want his attendance at Franklin D. Roosevelt's address construed as his favoring what he felt was a preparedness hysteria. Howard and Helene Wurlitzer were definitely pro-German before America became militarily engaged. They had complex family and business connections in Germany. And in the Queen City Helene wrote a regular newspaper column, the *Philosophena Ecke* (Philosophy Corner), for the *Cincinnati Volksblatt* in which her husband and others bought stock to help the publication survive troubled times. It would, nevertheless, go out of business at the end of 1919.

Friends personally felt the pressure to change. In the case of Robert Hochstetter's family, it meant anglicizing their name to Hilton. Fred Geier's aunt, Mrs. Louise Geier Tuechter, and her son, August Tuechter, were advised to spend some time in Florida to escape the stress and anti-German threats occurring in wartime Cincinnati.

German organizations also felt the need to change their names. Thus, the German National Bank, on whose board Fred A. Geier served, changed its name to the Lincoln National Bank. Anti-German sentiment contributed to the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment. Thus, national prohibition, initially adopted as a wartime measure to conserve grain, became permanent. Those connected with the brewing industry, including Paul Esselborn, were left to find new employment. And even later, after Prohibition's repeal, the local breweries never regained their previous economic and social significance.

After the war, things would never be the same in what was left of Cincinnati's German-American community. German-Americans probably welcomed the Armistice more than anybody. It meant, at least, a cessation of the wartime propaganda and a return to normalcy. But a return to normalcy in a world that was forever changed.

CHAPTER III

FREDERICK A. GEIER'S FINAL YEARS

The guns that began firing in August 1914 were finally stilled with the Armistice of November 1918. The death and devastation that ravaged Europe for over four years were over; but the turmoil and consequences of the Great War would influence world events throughout the remainder of the twentieth century. The imperial houses of the Hohenzollerns, Hapsburgs and Romanovs had been toppled. A scramble began for a new world order.

In the United States the transition to world peace was not marked by tranquillity in the political, economic or social arenas. Prohibition, introduced nationwide while the soldiers and sailors were "Over There," led to an increase in lawlessness. The suffix "gin" was commonly affixed to the word bathtub. Woodrow Wilson still occupied the White House but the "return to normalcy" would soon see the return of the GOP to national leadership. Much of Europe was threatened by Communist uprisings and other revolutions; America lived in fear of upheaval and this was reflected in the "Red Scares" at home.

The troubled times at World War I's end were especially felt in economic conditions and labor turmoil. While automakers, and consequently machine tool companies, benefited from pent-up demand during 1919, it was evident that an economic reckoning was not far off. In the past, machine tool exports often permitted stable production and employment when domestic sales and orders were soft. But that was not the case now as Germany and Austria, significant pre-World War customers, were devastated and "victors" England and France were near bankruptcy.

World War I had meant great profits for the Mill and increased wages for its employees. The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's own data showed employee compensation had increased 109.6 percent from May 1914 to May 1920. But the cost of living had also skyrocketed 89 percent during the period. Now while sales, orders and employment were ebbing, costs and prices remained high. The wartime rush for "production at any cost" had allowed inefficiencies to creep into the system and these inefficiencies were now taking their toll. High domestic production costs coupled with a fall in the exchange rate for the dollar vis-a-vis the English pound, French franc and Italian lira also impeded export sales.

LABOR STRIFE

War time and Woodrow Wilson had seen a major shift in the fortunes of American labor unions. This was especially true in the instance of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), which had long desired to organize the metal trades workers in Cincinnati. The key to unionizing the metal trades workers was the Mill, the largest machine tool manufacturing plant in Cincinnati.

Some Cincinnati trades were already organized, most notably the building trades which were 100 percent unionized. At the other end of the spectrum, however, 95 percent of the machine tool companies were open shops, as were 75 percent of the pattern making shops and 60 percent of the foundries. The years from 1915 through 1920 have been described by economist Harold Martin Groves as "the Golden Age for machinists as a very friendly administration was in power." Nationwide, IAM membership had increased from just over 75,000 in 1914 to 334,181 in 1919.

The IAM felt that a successful strike against the Mill would remove the most effective barrier to the organization of Cincinnati's industrial workers. Organizational efforts began during January 1919 when the IAM presented demands to Cincinnati employers signed by a Committee of Five. Questions regarding wages and the premium and bonus system of compensation were raised but it was widely regarded that the real issue was about the Union's insistence on a closed shop. Employers ignored the demands.

While they ignored the demands, employers took pains to present management's case to employees. On Saturday 13 September 1919, Fred A. Geier delivered two different speeches to the Mill's work force. In his talks Geier addressed the issues the IAM had raised regarding wages, hours and conditions. But he went further to rebut charges of employer greed and the attacks on his good name. In a rare instance of public introspection he said:

> You know the greatest ambition I've got is that I would like to finish my job here and feel that never in the history of the Company we did anything that we ought to be ashamed of, that I was able to make some people happier and better because I lived. Now this is the ambition of living that I have. If you think it is the getting of money, you are mistaken. Money has absolutely no value unless it is used for a good purpose. Now that is the whole sum and substance of it.

Little impact was felt at the Mill, in the Oakley Factory Colony, or elsewhere by the threat of a fall strike. Even the Cincinnati Labor Council was not enthusiastic about the IAM's cause, as it felt that union showed a radical tendency. This was underscored in November 1918, when members of the American Legion raided the Cincinnati headquarters of the Communist Labor Party, which had rented space from the IAM. In a trial growing out of the Legion's destructive raid, it was established that an assistant business agent for the IAM as well as three from the Committee of Five were members of the Communist Labor Party.

By the spring of 1920, the IAM again set about to organize the Mill and other metal workers throughout Cincinnati. The IAM's strategy was to first soften management's position by making bitter personal attacks on Fred A. Geier. The *Cincinnati News*, the official organ of the IAM, stated in its 28 April 1920 issue that Geier opposed progress in Cincinnati and that he had obstructed pay raises for the Queen City's firemen, policemen and teachers.

It would get worse later as the IAM's strike faltered. A propaganda handout titled "Seeing the Sights, In Geierville" alleged that after the IAM took over the Mill Fred Geier would be allowed to "saw wood at so much per hour with bonus and premium on every cord he saws over the allotted amount—like his friend in Holland." In the context of the time, the "friend in Holland" was a not very subtle reference to the exiled Kaiser Wilhelm II.

At the beginning of May, the IAM renewed its demands of the previous September and specified a wage increase of 25 percent. When the employers rejected the demands, union business agents ordered workers to strike. Earlier, on 29 April 1920, the IAM massed 700 picketers outside the Mill. Few of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's employees would have been in this gathering as they had voted 912 to 142 against the strike. Thus, 86.5 percent of the workforce was opposed to a work stoppage.

The strike, which dragged on until mid-September, was the biggest in terms of workers absent from the workplace in the City's history. Its impact on production and employees off-the-job was minimal at the Mill and throughout the Oakley Factory Colony. The IAM had greater success elsewhere in Cincinnati. Seventy companies were directly affected by the strike and half of these concerns were shut down during the early weeks of the strike before replacement machinists were hired.

The stakes were great—who would operate the plants—and the strike was rough. The Mill's management was alert and countered union actions. Guards were hired to protect employees entering or leaving the Mill. Employers also contracted with a law firm to represent workers. Cards bearing the following message were distributed:

> To our Employees:
>
> We have been employed by your company to protect you against unlawful acts of pickets. It is your right to work for this company upon any terms mutually agreed upon, without any person's permission; to come and go as you please, and not to be molested by any person.
>
> Any violence, force, threat, insult or abuse inflicted or threatened against you by pickets, strikers or any person is unlawful. Intimidation or coercion, actual or threatened, whether by words, manner or force of numbers, is unlawful.
>
> It is your right to refuse to discuss or argue with strikers or others the subject of the merits of the strike. It is unlawful on their part to persist in so doing, or attempt to compel you to listen to them, if you so refuse. The pickets or strikers have the right, in an orderly and peaceable manner to approach you and try to persuade you to their way of thinking, provided you are willing; OTHERWISE NOT. It is unlawful for them by any means to persuade you to break any contract with the company....[1]

An interesting sidelight to the picketing outside the Mill's entrance is the identity of one of the marchers. The "unappreciated" picketer was Fred A. Geier's brother, Philip O. Geier. He was not being disloyal—far from it. His marching was intended as another sign to employees that management was being vigilant and observant. Philip O. Geier, Jr., relishes telling the account of an organizer who stepped on his father's heels while he was marching in the picket lines. The organizer ignored his father's request to cease; but he did not escape the perhaps lucky punch that followed and knocked him out.

The picket line was said to be much smaller in subsequent days. Philip O. Geier's powerhouse punch was a clear signal that the Mill's management could take the offense to defend its interests. In September the strike was called off. Nationally, the IAM's strength ebbed and membership was down to 72,000 in 1925. And while the IAM would gain strength again during the New Deal and Fair Deal years, the Mill would never again experience such an organizational challenge as occurred in 1920.

FAMILY WEDDINGS

Through this period of economic and political uncertainty, Geier family life continued in its usual manner. But here, too, changes had occurred or were to come. During the war Frederick V. Geier had married Amey Massey Develin of Philadelphia. Now Fred A. Geier's two daughters became engaged.

During the winter months of 1920 the Geiers took, as Fred put it, "our last fling together as a family in beautiful California." It was his first trip to California. Amidst the sunshine and flowers he could briefly escape from thinking about declining sales and increasing union activity.

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[1] A. J. Hain, "Employees Uphold the Open Shop," *Iron Trade Review*, 14 October 1920, p. 1,074.

The first of the two weddings was that of his eldest daughter, Helen, and by now a graduate of Vassar. Helen married Henry N. Flynt, a native of Monson, Massachusetts, and a schoolmate of Frederick V. Geier at Williams College. Indeed, it is said that Frederick was responsible for introducing both of his sisters to the men who would become their fiances. Henry Flynt, his nickname was "Stubby," was an attorney by vocation and an ardent collector of antiques and manuscripts by avocation.

Their wedding took place at the Geier home on Grandview Avenue in the early evening of Saturday, 5 June 1920. The ceremony was conducted by the Reverend Christie of the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church. Various cousins and friends attended the bride. Frederick was the bridegroom's best man and Virginia Geier was the maid of honor.

Helen was said to have looked "wonderful" in her white satin and lace gown. There was a profusion of flowers: roses, iris, lilies, sweet peas and baby's breath. Gifts were displayed in the third floor billiard room. After the wedding service, dinner was served on the porches where tables had been set up. The view of the City and the River was described as beautiful.

The evening drew to a close when Helen ascended the staircase and threw her bouquet. Then all that remained was the escape of the bride and the groom and that flight was recorded as follows:

> ...all the rest began getting their wraps and going up to the machines to make the pursuit. Bacot, Dr. Tangeman, Norma [Geier] and I got into Virginia Burkhart's machine, she at the wheel. Then at last,—their limousine swept by and all the rest of the machines clashed into motion. But their get away had been too carefully planned. Their machine swerved up onto the curb and completely blocked the street—the two jumped out and into another waiting machine and away.[2]

There was not a lengthy interlude between family weddings during 1920. Helen's wedding was followed by an early fall wedding of Virginia Geier to Gilbert J. C. McCurdy. "Gil" McCurdy, like "Stubby" Flynt was a Williams College classmate of Frederick as well as a fellow brother in the Zeta chapter of Zeta Psi fraternity. McCurdy was a member of a family prominent in the mercantile business in Rochester, New York.

Once again the Fred A. Geier home was the setting for a wedding. It took place on a fair and "ideal" Saturday evening, 25 September 1920. Again, the minister officiating at the 6:00 p.m. ceremony was the Reverend Christie. Herbert Koch wrote in his diary, "The Culp string quartette played the music and whole affair, staged in the flower-laden house was beautiful. Little Paul Geier acted as Page, holding Virginia's train and taking himself quite seriously."

Following the receiving line and "highballs" in the men's smoking room, a supper was served on the porch. Koch found the occasion to be almost a fantasy as he penned, "The moon is out making everything wonderfully bright and clear and below the lights of the city and river...Then went out on the lawn and lit long sparklers. The hundreds of these made a beautiful effect and they threw these up into the trees so that the whole place was illuminated with them."[3]

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[2] Herbert F. Koch, Diary entry for 5 June 1920. Special Collections, Cincinnati Historical Society, Cincinnati.

[3] Ibid., Diary entry for 25 September 1920.

THE DEPRESSION OF 1920-1921

With the IAM strike broken and his two daughters happily married, it might have been a time for Fred A. Geier to review and reflect upon his life. And a great deal of reflection, at least, did take place in a 20-page talk he delivered before the CMMC's Foreman's Club on 3 November 1920. The talk took place as the bottom was falling out of machine tool sales in late 1920. The depression of 1920-1921 had begun. Although its duration was brief, it would be the nation's worst economic slump between the Panic of 1893 and the Great Depression.

Fred Geier remained an optimist and believed the Mill would weather the economic storm. He also spoke about continuing to learn better ways to build machine tools. He disclosed his intention to do something that he had never considered previously—of deliberately going into debt to keep Mill employees on the payroll. He stated what he intended to do:

> I had a man here the other day, one of the largest machine tool builders in England, and I told him I felt it the duty of every employer to try to operate his business so that he would keep a certain group of men continuously employed rather than put a lot of men on and a lot of men off as times got good and bad. [And I told him] that every employer has a responsibility to try to keep men uniformly employed and I believed it better to keep a man's income steady throughout the year than to give him extremely high wages for six months and nothing to do the following six months....Now it has been unfortunately the habit from the first to put men on and put men off and that creates bad social conditions and I would like if possible to try out the experiment of running a machine tool business that takes that phase of its obligation to society into account, and I sincerely hope that each and every one of you will do your damndest to make that go.[4]

Fred Geier envisioned borrowing $1,200,000, entailing payment of at least $100,000 in annual interest, to continue production through a four-month period. Milling machines were to be stored in a newly-completed plant building until such time as orders picked up.

There now appeared references to mortality, Fred A. Geier's, and immortality, the Mill's. Although he had just turned 50 in 1916, he became a grandfather for the first time on 30 July 1919 with the birth of Mary Alice, the first child of Frederick and Amey. Although his mother's family, the Ottens, were long-lived, he had already passed beyond his father's lifespan of 49 years.

Thus, the speech to the Foremen's Club was not the first occasion in which he referred to himself as an old man. As he scolded some of the older foreman who had stopped their personal development and continuing education he said, "There is nobody we want to feel kinder to than the older foremen, but dear man, let me tell you I am pretty old, but I am not so old but what I want to learn."

There was a physical price to be paid for the long hours devoted in recent years to overseeing a vital wartime industry as well as the energy extended to his numerous philanthropies and causes. Rich foods took a toll although he would never attain the "aldermanic proportions" of his father. Cigars were a favorite vice although it is unlikely that

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[4] Fred A. Geier, Speech to a meeting of the Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's Foremen's Club, 3 November 1920. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati, p. 20.

a scion of a family, the Ottens, engaged in the tobacco business would have looked upon smoking as a vice. Yet, at a time when most were largely unaware of the dangers of smoking, doctors cautioned two of his brothers, Dr. Otto Geier and Philip Geier, about excessive smoking. One brother had what was described as a "smoker's heart." There was also little time, and maybe inclination, to devote to exercise.

From left to right: Front row; Philip O. Geier and Dr. Otto P. Geier. Standing; Walter H. Geier, C. Wood Walter and Fred A. Geier.

Fred A. Geier's speech to the foremen set forth the boss's ideals and hopes, some of which such as stable employment, continue to elude management and appear more distant in the present day than in the past. Perhaps not surprisingly, with memories fresh of the recent Great War, he compared the discipline needed to lead a military operation with that required for factory production at the Mill. He said:

> What would happen if a regiment of soldiers was called into action and the captains and sergeants did not absolutely follow the leader?...Supposing their men in the lower ranks sneered or shrugged their shoulders at the commands from the head. What would happen? They would get licked; and that is what happens in a concern like this if every man in it doesn't absolutely follow the leader, doesn't absolutely obey to the letter every command that is inaugurated.

Fred A. Geier's call for absolute loyalty was one pillar in what he was attempting to achieve: a company greater than its parts and one that would survive the loss of any leader, including its president. He said it clearly:

> I want to so build it [The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company] so that should I pass out of it, that the thing is so solid and so substantially founded in every department that you can't kill it; that the movement that we have put into this thing, the standards that we have adopted, the ideals behind the standards will be so, no matter who drops out in one position or another, that the company will go on.[5]

Clearly the present was leading toward future changes. Companies must change and adapt to grow and survive. But the boss was clearly cross that the wartime leaps in production had carried a price in lowered quality standards. Now, he felt, was the time to return to the Mill's traditional standards of excellence, which he felt contributed greatly to its success. His explanation to the foremen:

> A business of this kind deals primarily with truth. You can't make a good machine tool unless every person and every thing that enters into that machine is true. If the gearing in that machine is falsely calculated—if the materials put into that machine are not up to specifications—if the workmanship is not up to the standard required, the machine is false, the machine is not true....I want you to get the idea that when I talk about truth I don't except myself or any man in the selling department. If I saw a salesman make a false statement about our machine and did it deliberately, knowingly, he could not sell another machine for this company.[6]

A sense of the national devastation of the 1920-1921 depression may be gained by a glimpse at several statistics. Before the nation's business indicators would again be registering positive numbers, there were more than 100,000 bankruptcies, 453,000 farmers lost their farms, and unemployment increased from just over 1,000,000 to 4,225,000. From 1920 through 1921 the wholesale price index experienced one of the most traumatic collapses in U.S. history.

Fred and Juliet loved to travel and it was unusual when a year went by without at least several trips and excursions. But 1922 was one of those rare years when the Geiers remained close to home. One reason was concern over the health of the Geier family matriarch, Sophia Louise Geier. She had been ill for six months before her death, attributed to nephritis cystitis, on 24 August 1922. She was two weeks shy of her 80th birthday.

While Fred A. Geier had assumed the role of a father to the large Geier clan when Philip Geier died some 35 years earlier, Sophia Louise remained a formidable presence in the household. From 1898 to 1903 she was on the Board of Directors of the Mill. More

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[5] Ibid., p. 5.

[6] Ibid., pp. 2-3.

importantly, in The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's first decade, she had provided her oldest son with much of the capital needed for him to acquire his interest and, soon, control.

Sophia Louise Geier had a passion for charitable work and the Deaconess Hospital and the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church were prime beneficiaries of her labors. An obituary read, "Many of present-day social and welfare organizations [in Cincinnati] owe their origin in large part to her efforts."[7]

She died at the home of her son, Dr. Otto P. Geier, at 1609 East McMillan Street, and it is there that the funeral services were held. A huge crowd was in attendance. Lost unfortunately, if they were ever written down, were the remarks delivered by her former pastor at Zion Evangelical Church. Herbert Koch noted that he "told at length of her good works."

The year of Sophia Louise Geier's death was also a year of births. All three of Fred A. Geier's married children became parents during 1922. On 25 May, Gilbert Geier McCurdy was born to Gilbert and Virginia McCurdy. On 12 August, Henry Needham Flynt, Jr., son of Henry and Helen Flynt, entered the family scene. Only a few days preceding Sophia's death, on 21 August, a son was born to Frederick V. and Amey Geier. He was named Frederick Virginius Geier, Jr. The previous year Amey Acheson Geier was born 24 August 1921.

The 1920-1921 depression had passed by now, although it would be several years before the Mill would fully participate in the prosperity of the "Roaring Twenties." In 1920 the company had sold 1,525 knee-and-column type milling machines. Sales slipped to 259 in 1921 and rose to 433 and 602 milling machines in 1922 and 1923.

As previously mentioned, one contributing factor to the decade's reputation as one of fast-living was the Volstead Act, which had brought prohibition throughout the land. The banishment of legal liquor proved to be a boost for illegal booze and bootleggers. Whatever sympathy Fred A. Geier might have had for the Amendment (probably very little) evaporated as the prohibition experience continued. He began making modest, but increasingly larger, contributions to the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment.

The boss was undoubtedly pleased with the three presidential elections of Harding, Coolidge and Hoover that brought about pro-business administrations. As for that all-important issue, tariff legislation, the Fordney-McCumber Tariff Act of 1922 substantially raised all tariffs that had been lowered by the Underwood Act. While exports of the machine tool industry were small throughout the 1920s, the Mill attained respectable foreign sales.

Copies of Fred A. Geier's speeches to employees have not surfaced for years following 1921. He was undoubtedly turning over some of his responsibilities to his son and successor, Frederick. During 1925 the boss received the resignation of perhaps his most literate, and certainly his most accomplished writer. Director C. Wood Walter was a Woodward High School colleague of Geier's and a *Cincinnati Commercial-Tribune* journalist before coming to the Mill. On 11 January 1902 he had married Fred Geier's sister, Margaret.

Frederick V. Geier became a C.M.M.C. director in 1923 and company secretary in 1924. His mark was felt in many areas, including corporate strategy and planning, where he recruited some key individuals, including Frederick Heitkamp.

Two additional new directors were named during the twenties. Walter W. Tangeman, who was Fred A. Geier's second cousin, would fill many roles before he retired as Chairman

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[7] "Mrs. Geier Dies at Age of 80 at Son's Home," *Cincinnati Commercial-Tribune*, 25 August 1922, p. 2.

of the Board on 30 November 1958. Sol Einstein, who had become the Mill's chief engineer in 1920, would later be instrumental in the creation of the patent department.

Before World War I, Fred Geier had made at least five trips to Europe, trips that often combined business with pleasure. But it is believed that he made only one journey to the Old World in the years following World War I. That journey, around 1928 or 1929, incorporated a North Cape cruise.

Rough seas were encountered during the sailing. Juliet, who was seasick much of the time, stayed in the cabin. She ventured out once and that was to eat a meal in the ship's dining saloon. And that was because of a ruse. Fred had offered two of his nephews, Philip O. Geier, Jr. and George Merryweather, $10 each if they could coax his wife out of the cabin. Juliet learned about the scheme and chose to collaborate with the young men to allow them to collect. It was the last time that she left the cabin for the duration of the voyage.

Unlike many wealthy and prominent industrialists, Fred Geier did not acquire a vacation residence where he and the family could spend portions of the year and escape from the Ohio Valley's summer heat and humidity and winter cold and snow. Some vacation destinations during this period were the Maine Coast, frequently during the month of August, where the family stayed at the Whitehall Inn in Camden and the Florida seashore during cold weather months. In Florida the Geiers were usually accommodated at the Gasparilla Inn at Boca Grande. There were still vacations spent at the Lake Placid Club in the New York Adirondacks, holidays at the New Jersey shore, and respites to the hot springs and spas of Virginia and West Virginia. But during the 1920s the Geiers added the American West to their itineraries with visits to California in both 1920 and 1926 and a sojourn to Glacier National Park and Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia, in 1921.

One seldom thinks of Fred A. Geier as a connoisseur. He did not build palatial homes, sail yachts, acquire vast estates, or collect carriages or cars. Yet one should not get the impression that he did not live well—very well in an unostentatious way. He smoked the best Cuban cigars, Partagas, although at this time he also had taken up the pipe. Willard Crane observed that he was a customer of Cincinnati's finest tailor. His appreciation of clothes and fabrics was passed on to Frederick and to Helen, both of whom had a keen interest in textiles. Home furnishings and decorative arts were sometimes purchased from Levi and Ginsburg, a New York City firm considered to be one of the finest in the antiques field. Even the everyday meals in the Geier household were noteworthy. A distant family relative from Ironton, Ohio, always marvelled that the Geiers served four vegetables at the day's main meal.

By 1926 business was booming again. Average employment jumped from 600 in 1925 to 1,300, a historic yearly high; sales of $7,100,000 exceeded those of the World War I era. It was again a time of optimism and confidence. It was the year the Mill overtook Rhode Island-based Brown and Sharpe to become the nation's largest machine tool company.

To help maintain its competitive lead, the Mill created a research laboratory in 1926. The laboratory soon proved its worth when, within a year, high-production machines with a hydraulically-controlled table feed were offered to industry. The contributions of the research laboratory meant that the C.M.M.C. became known as a research center, both in machine tool development and in the physics of metal cutting.

While Fred A. Geier was not as active in public affairs as he had been in earlier decades, he did not avoid civic responsibilities when asked. He would continue to give freely of himself to every civic and charitable interest. During 1926 he was named to the Directorship of the Cincinnati Branch of the Federal Reserve in Cleveland. In 1928 he became president of the Board of Trustees of The Children's Home of Cincinnati. In a lighter vein, he served a term as president of the Queen City Club's Optimist Club.

MILL CELEBRATES 45TH ANNIVERSARY

The final year of the Roaring Twenties was certain to be a special year in Frederick A. Geier's life. For one thing, 1929 was the 45th anniversary of the incorporation of the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company. And unlike some earlier anniversaries, the observance was to be a business occasion.

From 27 to 29 September, machine tool dealers from around the world assembled in Cincinnati for an International Sales Conference of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company and the Cincinnati Grinders. The conference, said to be the largest in the Queen City's history, preceded the National Machine Tool Builders' trade show that was being held in Cleveland.

Fred A. and Philip O. Geier, presidents of their respective affiliated companies, jointly made arrangements for the conference at which no expense was said to be spared. And the key participants in the three-day program told a great deal about the Mill that was and the Mill that was to be. The conference was opened by a five-minute "word of welcome" by Fred A. Geier and followed by Frederick V. Geier's 15-minute keynote address.

The 165 delegates, who represented countries on three continents and every state in the Union, were housed at the Hotel Alms and bussed to the Mill, where 12,000 square feet of floor space in one the new buildings had been converted into a modern theater with seats for 200. Here various papers were presented and every new machine that would be exhibited at the Cleveland trade show was demonstrated.

It was a heady time to be at the Mill with its lines expanding (the 1890 decision to specialize in just one line, while correct at the time was now outdated) and its potential enormous. The C.M.M.C.'s chief engineer, Sol Einstein, spoke on "Machine Tool Milestones—Past and Present," while Clement Booth and George Binns demonstrated new applications for centerless grinders. Research engineer Hans Ernst spoke about "Engineering Research and its Effect on Sales." And, for the first time, outsiders were permitted into the research laboratory to observe operations and testing.

There were many highlights and lighter moments. Frederick V. Geier had written a 25-minute play titled "As You Like It," which dramatized the development of new products. During the informal opening night dinner, George Merryweather, president of Motch & Merryweather, was presented a bouquet of flowers to celebrate the dealers' 25th anniversary.

That the world was undergoing rapid technological change was evident by the *Cincinnati Enquirer's* account of the Saturday morning session:

> When the delegates assembled in the specially constructed theater Fred A. Geier was called to the stage. When the curtain was lifted, Mr. Geier was seated at a desk receiving a call of congratulations from Charles Churchill & Co., agents of the company in London, England. All of the delegates listened to the conversation over the transcontinental wireless service.[8]

The main event of the three-day conference was the anniversary dinner on Saturday evening at the Hotel Alms. Leather wallets with the name of each guest in gold letters served as place cards. A brief history of the Mill titled "Forty-Five Years" was also distributed. The brochure contained a recent and flattering photograph of the Mill's "Big Chief."

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[8] "Fred A. Geier Honored Guest at 45th Anniversary Dinner of Dealers in Machine Tools," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 29 September 1929, p. 19.

Fred A. Geier was the guest of honor and Philip O. Geier served as toastmaster. The *Enquirer* reported that guests included Geier cousin August Tuechter, president of Cincinnati Bickford Tool Company; Wallace Carrel, president of Lodge & Shipley; Charles Meir, of the Acme Machine Tool Company; Bert Quillen, president of Cincinnati Planer; George Hey of the Avey Drilling Machine Company; Philip Geier, Jr.; Paul E. Geier; and all of the 165 conference delegates.

Naturally enough, the Mill's Sales Manager, Walter W. Tangeman, was a key participant. It was, after all, a sales conference. But it was the Assistant Sales Manager, Frederick B. Heitkamp, who received the most press with his talk, "The Sales Outlook for 1930." Heitkamp, who had analyzed and identified milling machine sales by industry classification had also canvassed economists and other industry analysts about future business trends.

Those questioned sometimes balked at predictions, especially when they were asked for business estimates five years hence. J. E. Caster responded, "You have this letter addressed to the wrong party. It should be to the Lord Almighty. He alone knows, but won't tell." And Mr. E. G. Rich of *The Annalist* responded, "Were I in a position to forecast at the present, developments along the many lines you suggest, I am inclined to think that another year would see me retire upon my income."

Heitkamp was not so cautious. In his talk he noted that the peak of the business cycle had probably occurred. But he concluded, "Economists almost without exception state that basic conditions are too sound to admit of any prolonged or drastic curtailment of industrial activity. Generally speaking, our sales outlook for 1930 is good, based on general economic conditions."

With such positive predictions, and with new machines (including the Super Giant Hydromatic milling machines) the foreign dealers boarded a special train on Sunday to take them to the trade show in Cleveland. The stock market crash was less than a month away. The dealers, and the producers, would need all the comfortable words they could get to help survive the worst economic time that lay just ahead.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The editors of *Fortune* magazine would, years later, analyze the Great Depression; they printed the following:

> The great depression...has been described as second only to the Civil War in its effects on the country, but in most ways it was much worse. It split the nation not geographically but mentally. It robbed otherwise rational men of their ability to be rational about economics. It degraded and stultified American capitalism, and turned some of the country's most creative—and also some of its most practical—minds to the facile promises of fascism, technocracy, social credit, socialism and communism. It brought despair and even hunger to millions of ordinary people, and planted blind resentment in their hearts. It wasted a total of nearly 200 billion man-hours. It did something that no foreign enemy, national disaster, or old- fashioned 'panic' had ever done. It paralyzed for years, American growth.[9]

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[9] Gilbert Burck and Charles Silberman, "What Caused the Great Depression," *Fortune*, February, 1955, pp. 94-95.

The last four-and-a-half years of Fred A. Geier's life was largely devoted to efforts aimed at ensuring the survival of the Mill, its workers and of the machine tool industry. The employment and sales figures for The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company reflect the deflation in the American economy, which did not stabilize until 1934:

YEAR	SALES	EMPLOYMENT
1929	$11,380,000	2,300
1930	$ 6,530,000	1,700
1931	$ 4,100,000	900
1932	$ 2,160,000	800
1933	$ 1,930,000	1,000
1934	$ 3,490,000	1,350

To maintain a core of employees for when better economic times returned, there was a great deal of work sharing during periods when purely profit-and-loss calculations would have dictated an even leaner workforce. But, as Fred A. Geier said, "...management from a humane standpoint, was unwilling to contribute further to the serious unemployment..."

The humanity of Fred A. Geier is perhaps best illustrated in the recollections of Judith L. Caster, whose father, Swan E. Bergstrom, would later become president of the Mill. In the early 1930s, The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company had started selling machine tools directly to customers instead of relying almost entirely on agents and distributors. Swan Bergstrom had moved to Detroit to open the Mill's Detroit sales office. Mrs. Caster wrote:

> It must have been about 1932, at Christmas, that my mother told the story of how bad things were. Dad went to Ford's on Christmas Eve afternoon and got an order for a stack of machines. I think there were 100 but I couldn't be sure. He called Cincinnati and talked to Mr. F. A. Geier who was almost in tears. He said, "Swan, I can keep 100 men on for three more months with that order."[10]

The Great Depression was a desperate and seemingly hopeless time for many Americans. Workers feared unemployment and many of the laid-off faced eviction from apartments or foreclosure on mortgages. Even the finances of those well off was affected. The following tables show Fred A. Geier's income in 1929 and 1933:

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[10] Judith L. Caster, Letter dated 12 April 1970, presumably written for the occasion of Swan E. Bergstrom's retirement from the Mill. The former company president became chairman of the board of directors in 1963. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

1929		1933	
Salary	$56,279.00	Salary	$11,021.29
Taxable Interest	$53,884.00	Taxable Interest	889.10
Non-taxable Interest	$23,757.16	Non-taxable Interest	$15,770.07
Dividends	$52,785.36	Dividends	$19,096.80
Rents	$8,750.00	Rents	$6,000.00
Misc.	$1,141.22	Misc.	$3,615.00

Through the troubled depression years, Fred A. Geier's company salary was reduced over 80 percent. And there was significant erosion in such income categories as dividends and taxable interest. But as his grandson, James A. D. Geier, noted, "Grandfather Geier had deep pockets." He had significant investments in bonds and an entire day might be employed in clipping coupons. It was during this time, when prices of luxury items were low, that he contemplated but ultimately rejected buying a yacht.

Fred Geier's efforts to beat back the Great Depression were not limited to the Mill or even the machine tool industry. On 1 October 1932, he was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Industrial Rehabilitation for the Cincinnati area. The rehabilitation movement, nationwide in scope, grew out of a conference with business and industrial leaders that President Hoover had called a few weeks previously. The National Chairman of the Rehabilitation Committee, A. W. Robertson of Pittsburgh, summed up the committee's purpose:

> We propose to the manufacturers that he make his repairs and improvements, modernize his plant now, when prices are low, when he can get the most for his dollars and when every dollar he spends will be put to work immediately to aid employment and the businesses which employ his customers.[11]

Fred Geier was given the task to quickly assemble a volunteer group of industrialists to contact every industrial concern in his district, one of nine groups organized in the Fourth Federal Reserve District. The committee's territory included Hamilton, Adams, Clermont, Highland and Brown Counties, all of Butler County except for Middletown, and that part of the Kentucky in the Fourth Federal Reserve District.

Fred Geier practiced at the Mill what he promoted throughout Southwestern Ohio. During 1932-1933, The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company established a rehabilitation program to provide work for employees not required for the production of the Mill's usual lines. The plan permitted 300,000 hours work: full-time work for 150 men for an entire year. And at a time of few new orders, the Mill undertook to build special machines that it would not have considered in normal times. One large roll grinder provided 19,000 manhours of

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[11] "Leader Selected for Drive to Create Work for Idle Here," *Cincinnati Times-Star*, 1 October 1932, p. 14.

employment. A thread miller and a piston ring grinder were also built. All were money-losers but they were job-savers.

Providing work took precedence over profits, too, in the burgeoning machine tool exports to the Soviets. The Russian business was characterized by low profit margins and long credit terms. But this business did provide employment at a time when idleness was the alternative.

It might seem that at the bottom of the Great Depression in 1932-1933 the effort of Fred Geier at the Mill had failed. There were only 801 employees on the payroll in July 1933. But those 801 workers were as many as were employed in all of the other Cincinnati machine shops. Plus a safety net existed for those laid-off at the Mill. The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's Mutual Aid, with additional assistance from the corporate officers, provided food, relief, medical service and sick benefits to many of those no longer on the payroll.

New programs, an alphabet of them, came after Herbert Hoover's defeat by Franklin Roosevelt in the 1932 presidential elections. Now "out" was the Committee on Industrial Rehabilitation; "in" was the New Deal's National Recovery Administration (NRA). During July 1933, Fred A. Geier telegraphed President Roosevelt that the C.M.M.C. intended to fully comply and support the NRA measures. As called for by the NRA, hours for the work week were reduced. Industrial leaders also saw promise in the NRA concept calling for cooperation among manufacturers.

Fred A. Geier had long known the value of cooperation. The combined marketing efforts of the "Big Six" had made Cincinnati the standard for machine tools the world over. And probably only anti-trust legislation had dampened some turn-of-the-century efforts intended to create a milling machine trust.

Now the NRA seemingly encouraged industrial cooperation on an unprecedented scale. Not losing time, leaders of the machinery industries formed in July 1933, an entirely new association, the Machinery and Allied Products Institute, MAPI. It was designated to speak on behalf of the entire machinery industry. Fred Geier assisted in organizing MAPI, which was the first group of its kind to draw various machinery and allied products industries into a unified organization.

The NRA would prove to be no more effective in thwarting the Great Depression than the Committee on Industrial Rehabilitation had been. It took the outbreak of World War II at the end of the decade to bring widespread American prosperity. But the Mill had started on the long road to recovery by 1934, while Fred Geier was still in charge. The climb back started earlier here than it had for most machine tool companies. Fred Geier's policy of holding together a nucleus of workers was both humane and farsighted. When business returned, an experienced work force was already in place.

Within the year Fred A. Geier would be dead. Devoted family members and directors of charities would compose eulogies to their fallen leader. The tributes were true and sincere. Yet it was the writer of the *Cincinnati Times-Star's* editorial at the time of the Chief's death who may have best captured the greatness of Fred A. Geier. The editorial read in part:

Fred A. Geier

> Many complimentary things can be said about Fred A. Geier, who died suddenly on Tuesday. But the greatest tribute he earned was through his attitude toward his employees during the depression.
>
> Hard times have affected different industries in different ways. It has been comparatively easy for some employers to provide jobs a fair part of the time, because business has not died away from them. It has been more difficult

for other employers to make as good a showing because the demand for their products during the worst periods of the depression practically ceased.

Fred Geier was in an industry which has seen bitter times during the depression. The writer of this editorial is somewhat familiar with his record during those periods. No Cincinnati employer, so far as we know, felt a keener sense of responsibility to the men and women who depended upon him for jobs, nor went further out of the way to provide those jobs when they were so greatly needed.[12]

Fred and Juliet had traveled to Europe during the summer of 1928. Accompanying them were Juliet's sister, Mrs. Emilie Crane, son Paul Esselborn Geier, and C. M. Bookman, head of the Associated Charities. Emilie Crane's son, Willard, who had just completed two years of graduate research at the University of Munich, joined the touring party in Paris.

According to Willard's account, all had a splendid time in Paris. In addition to sightseeing, there were formal dinners with members of Parisian society. These were hosted by the officers of the Mill's sales agency in France, Aux Forges du Vulcain. Multi-course repasts with fine wines were the norm. One evening Fred Geier, C. M. Bookman and Willard Crane, went out for an evening on the town. The light-hearted party stopped in at the Brassiere Universalle, the Folies Bergere and some of the better-known cafes. A more somber visit took the travelers to the French battlefields. Destruction was still very much in evidence a decade after the Armistice. A stop was made to visit the Cathedral at Rheims.

An idea that Fred A. Geier may have had as early as the boom years in the 1920s was finally acted upon during the depression years. His idea was to establish a manufacturing plant in Europe. Sometime near the end of the Roaring Twenties he had sent his son, Frederick, to Europe to select a site for overseas operations.

James A. D. Geier recalls that his father and grandfather had sharply divergent views as to where such a facility should be established. Frederick A. Geier favored Germany, the center of manufacturing on the European continent, while his son had a pronounced preference for Great Britain, the center of a still mighty Empire. After the trip to Europe, the son warned the father of probable future political and economic turmoil in Germany. In the end, England was selected and production began in rented quarters outside of Birmingham in June 1934. By July the overseas facility was making money and contributing to the Mill's foreign sales and overall profits.

Given the time required to keep a machine tool company operational during America's foremost economic catastrophe, it could have been expected that a now aging industrialist would have relinquished some civic leadership positions. Many did, but Fred A. Geier was not a man to shirk responsibilities. In June 1933, Charles J. Livingood, who represented many of Mary Emery's interests in the community, resigned the presidency of the Ohio Mechanics Institute. Livingood cited the pressure of business for his giving up a position he had held since June 1918. Fred Geier would succeed him as president of an institution that was almost always in financial distress.

On 6 February 1934, Fred Geier would again step into the shoes of Mr. Livingood. This time Livingood resigned as vice-president of the Model Homes Company of Cincinnati. His successor was the Mill's Chief. Dealing with rental properties can be frustrating even in the best of times. And this was the worst of times with vacant units and tenant arrearages. It took a sensitive person to be responsive to both economic factors and humanitarian concerns.

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[12] "Fred A. Geier," *Cincinnati Times-Star*, 28 March 1934, p. 6.

The following month, March, Fred A. Geier became ill. A letter he dictated the morning of 27 March 1934 states he became ill while on a vacation in Georgia. He had traveled to Augusta where he met with Mason Britton, Jim Gleason and a few others for the Spring Golf Meeting. Fred Geier first vacationed in Augusta in 1931, the year the Augusta National Golf Club was organized. Beginning in the 1890s, Augusta had become a pleasant winter refuge to Northerners, who discovered that the town had peculiarly soothing climate and who found the pine-scented air refreshing. American captains of industry also found the Bon Air Vanderbilt—$5 a day, American plan—socially attractive. It was at the Bon Air Vanderbilt that Fred Geier stayed portions of February and March each year from 1931 until his final outing in March 1934.[13]

But one can speculate that he may have traveled to Dixie to escape some of the stress he was encountering. Juliet had been hospitalized for several weeks and was undergoing a battery of tests. And he fretted that Frederick seemed unable to shake a cold and wished that he could get away for an extended period on a sunny isle. At any rate he had been under the weather for at least two weeks. His condition was not considered alarming and certainly not serious. The morning of Tuesday 27 March, Fred A. Geier returned to his office for the first time in weeks. Office employees said he seemed to be in good spirits and, it appeared, in good health. He spent part of the morning working on correspondence. He wrote to Ralph E. Flanders, later a United States Senator from Vermont, expressing his gratitude for work the head of the Jones & Lamson Machine Company had done for machine tool builders.

One of the letters he answered was to C. Edgar Wilson, a classmate who had been the toastmaster a few weeks earlier at the 50th anniversary reunion of the Woodward High School Class of 1884. Fred wrote:

> My Dear Edgar:
>
> Our 50th anniversary has come and gone. I had fully expected to take an active part in our anniversary, but unfortunately while South I took sick and this is the first morning I am back at the office for a short time.
>
> As a member of the class, let me thank you for the interest you have taken in our anniversaries, and let us hope we may both be on hand for the 51st celebration.
>
> Sincerely yours,
>
> Fred A. Geier

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[13] Although Fred Geier had vacationed in Augusta for several years he never witnessed "The Masters" at the Augusta National Golf Course. The genesis of that golf classic began on 22 March 1934, five days before his death. The tournament was then simply identified as "The First Annual Invitation Tournament." That Augusta was a magnet for affluent and prominent men who enjoyed the game of golf is demonstrated by a listing of some of the club's charter members: "E. F. Hutton and Alpheus Bean of the investment world; W. Alton Jones, president of Cities Service; Eugene Grace of U.S. Steel; the pioneer sportswriter, Grantland Rice; Frank Willard, the "Gasoline Alley" cartoonist; heavyweight boxing champion Gene Tunney; actor Freeman Gosden, "Amos" of "Amos n' Andy"; and, later, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, before he became President."

For the above list as well as additional history of the Masters see Furman Bisher, "Augusta National: How the golf course, and the tournament, grew." *Wall Street Journal,* advertising supplement, 8 April 1993, pp. 6, 18.

Within a few hours of dictating and signing the letter, Fred A. Geier was dead. He had returned to his home on Grandview to have lunch and died while reading a newspaper. Family members, seeing him slumped in a chair, at first thought that he was sleeping. He was discovered by his sister-in-law, Emilie Crane, as Juliet was in the hospital at the time. The police life saving unit was called and told to bring a pulmotor [a respiratory device to pump oxygen into and out of lungs]. The family was distressed when the police, instead, sent two men to investigate whether a pulmotor was necessary.[14]

Meanwhile, Fred Geier's attending physician, Dr. David A. Tucker, Jr., had been summoned. He pronounced Geier dead of myocarditis acute with a probable coronary occlusion.

The funeral took place two days later. The burial rites were marked by simplicity and, as was the case on so many important family occasions, held at the Geier home. The casket was in the library, the room where he died. The Reverend William E. Montgomery, pastor of the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church, was in charge of the arrangements. Mr. Bookman, the Geier family friend who directed the Associated Charities for many years, spoke briefly at the services about Fred A. Geier's interests. His conclusion was one shared by many Cincinnatians, "We loved Fred Geier as he loved his fellow-men."

Funeral music was provided by the Culp string quartette, a group frequently employed by the Geiers and Esselborns on important occasions. Burial took place in the Geier family lot at Spring Grove Cemetery. The pallbearers were his sons, Frederick and Paul; his son-in-law, Gilbert McCurdy; nephews, Philip Cone, Philip O. Geier, Jr., Dr. Horace Tangeman, George Merryweather and Willard Crane.

Tributes flowed in from throughout Cincinnati as well as from business associates throughout the world. The Cincinnati Commercial Club held memorial services the day preceding the funeral and later attended the funeral as a group. Herbert G. French, Charles W. DuPuis and Hulbert Taft were designated to draft the Club's memorial resolution.

From the leaders of the many philanthropies on whose behalf Fred Geier had so lovingly labored came words of tribute. They shared the grief that was felt by his family as well as his Mill family. At the Morris Plan Bank, Herbert F. Koch took note of the passing of Fred Geier who was the bank's president. He wrote:

> Just cannot believe he is dead. This will be a terrible blow to the bank as he was really the only officer that took a real interest and had a vision for the future of the institution.[15]

Few Cincinnatians had such a boundless interest in civic affairs. Rare, too, was the dedication and devotion he demonstrated to these various endeavors. John Bayne Ascham, the superintendent of The Children's Home, may have best captured the essence of Fred A. Geier when he wrote:

> In business, in education, in social service, in civic affairs and in religion, those who worked with him were inspired by his deftness in handling practical affairs and by his shining faith that the world which ought to be is more real

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[14] Herbert F. Koch, Diary entry for 27 March 1934. Special collections, Cincinnati Historical Society, Cincinnati.

[15] Ibid.

than the world that is. His life was a rare intertwining of busy, practicable performance and unquenchable idealism.[16]

Original home on Grandview Avenue.

Geier home on Grandview after remodeling in mid-1920s.

[16] John Bayne Ascham, "Fred A. Geier," *Children's Home Record* 65. no. 4 (April 1934): 1.

CHAPTER IV

PROMOTER OF EDUCATION

Fred A. Geier did not attend college. And given his prominence in industry, manufacturing and civic enterprises, few are likely to remember his contribution to education. But his legacy in education and training was a rich one. It is characterized by some successes, most notably the adoption of the cooperative courses in engineering at the University of Cincinnati while he was Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and by his efforts on behalf of vocational training both at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company and in the Cincinnati public school system. Much of what he believed and espoused is as relevant at the close of the twentieth century as it was at the beginning.

His family was certainly aware that industrial education was one of his passions. In a 46-page memorial book (only 12 copies were printed), his work on behalf of education interests is told immediately following his accomplishments in business. The memorial's author noted that, "He was an advocate of vocational training, aided and supported the Cincinnati Board of Education in its vocational training program, and was a moving spirit in the establishment of the Continuation Department of the public schools."

Geier's interest in and influence on industrial education extended beyond the Mill's walls and Cincinnati's boundaries. His influence was nationwide and his interest was trans-Atlantic. In 1906 a group of nationally prominent manual training instructors organized to bring together various business men, labor leaders and educators in an umbrella organization known as the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education (NSPIE). Its activities were dedicated to the educational and industrial needs and interests of the varying regions. The organization developed into a highly efficient lobbying interest group that survives today as the 46,000-member American Vocational Association. Fred A. Geier held a national office as NSPIE vice-president and was instrumental in bringing the fifth NSPIE convention to the Queen City in 1911.

The machine tool industry that was blossoming in Cincinnati in the Gay 90s was on the cutting edge of technology. Its customers included sophisticated builders of bicycles, cash registers and electrical equipment. The machine tool industry needed skilled and smart workers. Brains instead of brawn was the requirement in these mills. Thus, there was the problem of finding skilled mechanics and of keeping them in Cincinnati as wage scales were higher in many other large cities.

The Mill's apprentice program and, beginning in 1906, its apprentice school, were early efforts to train skilled machinists for the Mill. The apprenticeship concept extends back to the medieval period in Europe. Then, craft guilds codified the master-apprentice relationship. In nineteenth century America, apprenticeship programs were haphazard and largely depended on how much time a foreman and his experienced machinists had to give to the young apprentice.

Contractual apprenticeship at the Mill began in 1896 when Theodore "Dusty" Umbach inked the Mill's first apprenticeship agreement. Without question this casual, even if contractual, system worked only some of the time. There was no place for academic shop subjects such as mechanical drawing, shop math on the Mill floor. And apprenticeship programs were also hindered by the fact that English was infrequently spoken in many leading manufacturing establishments.

By 1907 The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company had established its own in-house apprenticeship training school in a building at the Spring Grove Avenue plant. By then Fred

Geier had concluded that its 38 machinist apprentices required far more formal education in specific areas than they had acquired during seven years' education in the Cincinnati public schools. In an address before the National Metal Trades Association, he lamented that, "We find these boys so deficient in elementary common-school education, that they are unable to translate fractions into decimals, unable to read the simplest drawings, and in fact, unable to use tools requiring any mental effort."[1]

For an instructor, the Mill employed a "trained shop man" with a "natural ability to teach." Each of the 38 attended class for two hours one evening a week. Geier knew what he wanted from the apprentice school. "We do not ask them to recite lessons, but teach them to solve problems, and all the problems have a direct application to the work each boy is doing in the shop."[2] Exhibiting before-and-after examples of work, Geier was encouraged by what the apprenticeship school was accomplishing. Earlier careless drawings were now careful sketches. Painstaking and systematic work was replacing slovenly exercises. All this apprentice schooling, Geier concluded, "will make a more efficient workman, and in their higher efficiency we will find ample compensation for the special training we are giving them now."[3]

While the in-house apprentice school at the Mill appeared successful, it did not last long. It would have been difficult and costly to try to widely duplicate the Mill's model school. Few mill owners could afford their own shop training programs. Not all apprentices felt they could afford the time and effort for after-work classes. Cincinnati School Superintendent Dyer noted that the apprentices' mental capabilities were reduced at the end of an exhausting work day: "Concentrated attention to a machine for ten hours leaves little surplus energy to draw on at night." It was Dyer's conclusion that the only reasonable solution to the problem of apprenticeship instruction was a concept known as "continuation schools." These schools would be a daytime undertaking.

Continuation schools are a German contribution to vocational education. In 1869 they were established in Germany for 14-to-17-year olds who entered vocational occupations. Students would attend these schools about six hours a week: one hour either before or after work. The four-part curriculum was divided into physical training, civics, business and physical science.

Fred A. Geier and the NSPIE found continuation schools to be an interesting and attractive concept. In the fall of 1909, the NSPIE brought German educator George Kerchensteiner, an authority on continuation schools, to Cincinnati as one stop on a six-city United States tour. Kerchensteiner was superintendent of Munich schools and his visit provided extensive exposure for the German method of industrial education.

Action for continuation schools had been underway before Kerchensteiner's visit. During the spring of 1909, six Cincinnati machine tool builders wrote to Cincinnati School Superintendent Dyer seeking his assistance in establishing day classes for apprentice machinists. The six manufacturers, including Fred Geier, contended, "The future development of our industrial interest upon which the growth of the city is largely dependent, will be materially advanced."

In September 1909, a continuation school was opened. At that time it was limited to apprentice machinists of whom almost 200 men, aged 16 to 21 years, were enrolled. The

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[1] Fred A. Geier, "Engineering and Industrial Education," *American Machinist*, 7 May 1908, p. 710.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid., 711.

continuation school operated under the auspices of a three-member Committee on Continuation Schools that was operated by the Cincinnati Board of Education.

The apprentices took half-day classes once a week over a four-year period. The school year ran for over 48 weeks. Employers paid the apprentices regular wages during this school time. Two teachers, both described as experienced tradesmen, were employed by the school board to instruct the apprentices. The classes focussed on practical shop problems and the course materials included manufacturers' catalogs and shop blueprints. It is certain that one, and probably both, of the instructors were furnished by The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, even though they were employed by the Cincinnati School Board. The apprentices were taught mathematics, science, shop theory and general culture. The latter consisted of history, civics, reading, spelling and writing.

At the culmination of the four-year apprenticeship, the apprentice earned a degree of completion. He was also eligible for admittance to the University of Cincinnati's Engineering College. Fred Geier's observation was that the school continued to be a valuable inducement for recruiting apprentices. Also, it resulted in greater efficiency in training.

Formal classes for apprentices were started in 1907 at the Spring Grove Avenue plant.

Fred Geier's contributions to industrial education were further amplified in the family's memorial volume, in which it was written that, "He placed at the disposal of the public schools an entire division of the Milling Machine Company that had been built up to do the sort of work to be undertaken by the Continuation Department. He also led industrialists in

Cincinnati in lending equipment to the Board of Education for the Trade School he helped organize."[4]

Geier's advocacy of industrial education was forcefully expressed in trade journals, at industry conventions, in the *New York Times* editorial page, and even before a United States Senate Finance Committee hearing on tariff revisions in 1912. Alarmed at the results of the excellent German education system which was producing superior industrial workers (whose products were capturing markets world-wide to the detriment of U.S. manufacturing), Geier counseled industrial education to keep America competitive. To buttress his argument, he quoted President Emeritus Charles W. Eliot of Harvard:

> The remedy for the defects in our educational system is to have industrial schools for children between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. The law must assist in getting the children into the schools.
>
> We can become a true democracy only when we shall be as much concerned about training a good blacksmith as we are about training a good lawyer, when our system of schools offers equal opportunities to all classes and all talents.[5]

In the middle of the twentieth century most conservatives strongly opposed federal aid and intervention in the school system. Fred Geier, however, was an early and influential advocate of legislation providing for federal vocational training. He was chairman of the industrial education committee of the Cincinnati Business Men's Club, which, along with the Chamber of Commerce, sponsored a two-day meeting on vocational education on 8-9 December 1913. Among the experts at the joint meeting were: Herman Schneider of the University of Cincinnati, Ohio Mechanics Institute President Herbert Miles, NSPIE Secretary Charles Prosser and Cincinnati School Board members Edith Campbell and John Withrow.

Fred Geier chaired the two-day meeting, which approved numerous recommendations promoting industrial education. In his dissertation Dr. Richard Lakes enumerated some of the recommendations. His list included:

> ...elementary-level prevocational courses "to enable the child to make a more intelligent choice of vocation; continuation schools and cooperative educational arrangements with employers and school systems; evening industrial education for adult daytime workers; salary increases for industrial teachers and supervisors to attract "a new type teacher, one who has had the practical experience in industry..."[6]

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[4] *Frederick August Geier: 1864-1934* (Cincinnati: Privately printed, 1934), p. 9.

[5] Charles W. Eliot quoted by Fred A. Geier in a presentation on tariff legislation believed delivered before the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance on 13 February 1912. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[6] Richard Davis Lakes, "From Manual Training to Trade Instruction: The Evolution of Industrial Education in Cincinnati, 1886-1920" (Ph.D. diss., Ohio State University, 1988), 152.

THE OHIO MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

A long involvement on the Board of the Ohio Mechanics' Institute (OMI) contributed to Fred Geier's understanding of the problems and promise of industrial education. The OMI, founded in 1828, was the first technical school west of the Appalachians. Its purpose was to improve the minds of young men and women through lectures and by providing a lending library. Thousands of area inhabitants would benefit and receive practical training over the years through OMI's classes in drafting and drawing, mathematics and engineering.

Beginning in 1902, Fred A. Geier served for 32 years on the Board of Directors of OMI. He was either Vice-President or President for the 16 years prior to his death in 1934. Fred Geier was held in high esteem by his fellow OMI directors, and by the faculty and staff. In a memorial resolution after his death, the faculty and staff commended his loyalty to OMI as well as his aggressive leadership. They went on to state, "As a leader in Cincinnati's industrial life and civic and philanthropic activities, he was outstanding, but it is as the dynamic, kindly commander of the destinies of the Institute and the generous untiring worker for its welfare that we mourn his loss."[7]

In 1847 the OMI had constructed its own building on the southwest corner of Sixth and Vine Streets. By the turn-of-the-century, it was apparent the OMI needed new and larger quarters. During September 1905, a special committee on new quarters proposed that property on the northeast corner of Walnut and Canal (today's Central Parkway) be acquired. The result was new quarters for the OMI, now known as the Ohio College of Applied Science and a part of the University of Cincinnati.

The cost of the new OMI building was entirely underwritten by Mrs. Mary Emery as a gift in memory of her husband, Thomas J. Emery. Its plan included the first concert hall in the United States to have no obstructed-view seating. From its dedication on 10 January 1912 until 1936, the concert hall would be the home for the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.[8] From the time of the Great Depression until 1958, space was rented in the OMI building by the Natural History Museum for its offices and exhibits. The Natural History Museum would later receive substantial support from Fred A. Geier's son, Frederick V. Geier, and other family members.

The OMI's mission was to provide technical training for the city's artisans and artists. Perennially plagued with financial problems, it survived in large part because of generous benefactors such as Miles Greenwood (1807-1855), a machinery and iron products manufacturer. From May to September 1898, Perrin G. March was appointed OMI superintendent. March would leave OMI in September to become president of the Cincinnati Shaper Company, one of Cincinnati's leading machine tool builders.

During half the years of Geier's OMI directorship, John Louis Shearer, a native of Bavaria, was the superintendent. Shearer succeeded Perrin March in 1898 and had strong beliefs which he often expressed forcibly. There is evidence that his views did not always dovetail with Fred A. Geier's. However, both Geier and Shearer felt deeply that municipalities and states had failed to recognize the full importance of technical training.

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[7] Cited in Frederick A. Geier, Op. Cit, p. 39.

[8] The dedication program for the new Ohio Mechanics' Institute building and Emery Auditorium included a welcoming address by Fred A. Geier as well as addresses by attorney Albert Bettinger and the Rev. Charles Frederic Gore, pastor of the Avondale Presbyterian Church and editor of *Cincinnati, The Queen City*. Musical selections by the Cincinnati Liederkranz and from a quartet were intersperred throughout the evening's program.

They both were familiar with the German educational system and wished to see significant aspects of it adopted throughout the United States. Institutions such as OMI were needed, Shearer felt, to provide instruction for the education of skilled artisans who otherwise would have education denied them by "the red tape of scholasticism." In Shearer's opinion scholasticism was "education gone to seed."

Superintendent Shearer's outspoken views could get him into trouble, as was the case when he stated that productive work and studies should be undertaken during daylight hours; the evening was, naturally, meant for reflection. However, it was America's entry into World War I that at last doomed his superintendency. Twenty years of soliciting, indeed begging, for funds had taken a toll. More significant, perhaps, was the fact that he had patterned OMI after institutions in Germany. That, too, had gone out of fashion. Finally, Shearer was believed to have had reservations about OMI accepting war contracts and providing war training.

During the spring of 1918, Shearer resigned, and a special committee was appointed to select a successor. Speaking for that committee, Fred A. Geier reported that Professor John T. Faig of the University of Cincinnati had been chosen as OMI's new head. Faig's leadership at OMI would continue into the 1950s.

U.C. TRUSTEE AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

The training of apprentice machinists at the Mill or at continuation schools and the instruction of artisans at OMI were subjects dear to Fred Geier. He was a persuasive advocate of vocational or industrial education. Apprentice programs at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, however, would come and go with demand and available funding, and educators have often ignored or slighted secondary-level trade schools. For these and other reasons, Fred A. Geier's greatest and most enduring contribution in the education field may have been in the collegiate training of engineers.

Geier's appointment to the University of Cincinnati Board of Trustees was made by Mayor Julius Fleischmann during the spring of 1905 to fill the unexpired term of Alfred B. Benedict. In 1907 Geier served on the board's committee on finance, committee on the engineering college and technical school and committee on academic affairs.

While Fred Geier had not attended college, he nevertheless had several connections with the University of Cincinnati. His brother Otto P. Geier was an 1896 graduate of the Ohio Medical College, which was associated with the University. In March 1901, Miss Emilie Esselborn was appointed to a position as instructor in Romance languages as well as U.C.'s first Dean of Women. Emilie Esselborn, who became Fred A. Geier's sister-in-law in 1903, had the previous year married Dr. William Crane, who was on the Ohio Medical College staff. And the Philip Geier family home on Ohio Avenue was leased to the University of Cincinnati for use as a dormitory early in the twentieth century. Conceivably both Laura and Juliet Esselborn may have lived in the one-time Geier homestead during 1901, for a cryptic entry in Juliet Esselborn Geier's diary reads, "L. and J. to Cincinnati - Dormitory (well named)."

"Theory can best be learned in school; an understanding of man and his mechanism can be learned only where they operate."

—Dean Herman Schneider

The rise of giant corporations, advancing and increasingly complex technology, and more sophisticated machine tools meant that the old ways of recruiting and training employees in industrial plants would no longer suffice. Trained engineers were needed in the shops, but the academic world was a world of theory with little concern for practical shop applications. And the mechanics and foreman often felt that a green engineer could never make worthwhile contributions in the shop.

In 1903, a new Assistant Professor of Civil Engineering, Herman Schneider, arrived at the University of Cincinnati from his home state of Pennsylvania. With him came the idea of combining shop and school, merging practice and theory, in one course of study. Schneider had himself learned the value of practical experience while studying civil engineering at Lehigh University. His mornings were spent in college classrooms; in the afternoon he worked in an architect's office. This practical experience gave him an edge over his classmates. Schneider was eager to institute his cooperative program, but he had few converts. Those few who endorsed his plan, fortunately, were men of influence.

J. M. Manley, head of the Cincinnati branch of the Metal Trades Association, liked the idea, even though his association refused to endorse the concept. Ernest DuBrul and Fred A. Geier, however, also liked the idea. DuBrul owned a cigarette machine company. More important than Geier and DuBrul being industrialists was the fact that they were both on the University of Cincinnati Board of Directors.

After overcoming considerable opposition from both manufacturers and academicians, 13 companies agreed to use co-op students. After three years of evangelizing his idea, Herman Schneider later wrote that the University of Cincinnati Board of Directors passed a resolution "...to try for one year—this cooperative idea of education at the University of Cincinnati and for the failure of which—we will not assume responsibility."

The first co-op class had six professors and 27 students, of whom only 12 would graduate. The program was designed to alternate two weeks of school, with two weeks of work. The regular four-year engineering program had 107 students in 1906. However, the co-op program gained so much popularity that the four-year program was discontinued after World War I.[9]

The Mill's management remained divided over participating in the co-op program. Fred Geier had not pushed for its adoption at the Mill and those less friendly to the concept were set against having "rah rah" boys in the shop. The shop superintendent, Ernest Chace, was for the idea, but the office manager stood opposed. Subterfuge was employed to get around the impasse between superintendent and office manager. The first co-ops placed at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company in 1906 were George Binns and Elmer Otting. They operated drill presses in Bill Hummel's department. The two alternated at their work station: one was at school while the other was at work. Ernest Chace, however, put only one name

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[9] The success of the Cincinnati experiment, the co-op system, was phenomenal. The first year there were 75 applications for admission, the second year 800 inquiries. University of Cincinnati historian Reginald McCrane wrote, "Within the years after its foundation, H. S. Pritchett, President of the Carnegie Foundation, and Frederick W. Taylor, the founder of scientific management, declared the plan was one of the most constructive steps in education and called attention to the spread of its nationwide influence."

on the payroll. Binns collected both men's pay (which was five cents for a 10-hour day) and then paid Otting. After six months, the office manager learned the truth, but it was too late. The system worked too well.

D. F. Pratt, first director of the Mill's training school, gives a somewhat similar account based on a conversation during 1950 with George Binns:

> Mr. Geier had not been especially enthusiastic about the co-op plan so the boys were placed here for many months before he actually discovered that he had co-ops in his plant. Discovery came about by Mr. F. A. Geier meeting Dean Herman Schneider on the train the next summer in 1907. Dean Schneider asked F. A. Geier when he was going to take some more co-ops and, of course, F. A. replied that he didn't have any now—what did he mean. Dean Schneider said, "Well, I guess I'll have to tell you what has been going on." They discussed the matter at some length rather forcibly on the train and resulted with the following agreement. Dean Schneider said that Mr. Geier should make a careful analysis of whether the co-ops were filling a man's job at the Mill and whether they were doing a good job, and if they were worth the time and effort spent on them. If they were not, Mr. Geier was to send Dean Schneider a bill. However, if Mr. Geier found that the boys were okay, he agreed to take four more.[10]
>
> George Binns was in the first co-op class to graduate from the University of Cincinnati and upon graduation was employed by The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company.

Opposition to the co-ops at the Mill had evaporated during 1907, and there were six placed in the plant. Fred Geier further stated:

> Our records show that these young men are not an expense, but that they at the present yield a profit to the company. They are able to do the work as well, and in many cases, in less time, than other men who have been in the shop for a longer period and have had longer practical training.

From Herman Schneider's dream came a program that has been imitated in 63 countries and includes half-a-million students. There are now co-op courses in fields as disparate as art and aerospace. It was the novel experiment in 1906, in large part in the Cincinnati metal trade shops, that resolved the conflict between shop and school and showed a better way to educate and train American youth for careers in industry.

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[10] D. F. Pratt, memorandum dated 3 May 1950. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

A LOSING BATTLE WITH PRESIDENT DABNEY

Who's the man that jarred the University?
Who brought poor Dabney a World of adversity:
Who lost his job on account of the fight
But who knew all the time that he was right?
Fred A. Geier

—B. B. Quillen

Less than one year before Fred Geier received his appointment to the University of Cincinnati's Board of Trustees, Charles Dabney commenced duties as the University's thirteenth president. The early years of Dabney's presidency and the five years, 1905-1910, that Fred Geier served on the board were a time of great change. In 1905 a College for Teachers was started; in 1906 the Graduate School was founded and the co-op program was established; in 1909 the Medical College of Ohio and the Miami Medical College were merged and a new medical college was formed.

The rapid growth carried a cost. Professional schools and graduate programs were more expensive to run than undergraduate instruction. The budget showed a deficit, and undergraduate enrollment was either stagnant or declining.

President Dabney had a knack for stepping on toes as when, during a speech in Toledo, Ohio, he advocated municipal ownership of public service corporations. It was a view that was repugnant to *Cincinnati Times-Star* publisher Charles P. Taft, who considered such sentiments socialism pure and simple.

On 3 January 1908, Fred A. Geier was first nominated for the presidency of the board. He declined to accept the nomination and, instead, nominated Dr. Henry Melville Curtis for the position. A year later, on 2 February 1909, Geier was nominated again and this time accepted. In the board's election he received four votes to Dr. Curtis' two votes and Robert W. Stewart's one vote.

The stage was set for a battle royal within the board on the question of the university's direction and whether President Dabney was to continue as the university's president. During 1909 President Dabney's original five-year contract expired. The question arose whether he should be re-elected for an indefinite period at his present salary of $9,900 per annum or whether a new president should be sought.

The board was sharply divided on what course to take. Discussion at the open board meeting on 3 March 1909 was reported to be so spirited that "the reporters of the local press were excluded and an executive session was ordered." Even so, one board member, Ernest DuBrul became so excited during the heated debate "that he could be heard above the noise made by the scrubwomen and the janitors who were cleaning the halls." DuBrul felt that no decision should be made until after the university budget for the upcoming year was taken up. He also declared President Dabney's salary was "exorbitant."

Geier, as board president, announced that the university's welfare required a cessation of the angry exchanges and suggested an adjournment. The matter of re-electing President Dabney at a salary of $9,900 was referred to the committee of the whole in executive session. On 20 March 1909, the committee's minority report was submitted that was signed by Ernest DuBrul, George Guckenberger and board president Geier. The report advocated that Dabney be retained at a salary of $8,000. This $1,900 pay cut was, in effect, a vote of no-confidence and one the proud Dabney would find unacceptable.

The lengthy report, included in the board's minute books, was an often eloquent statement about the signers' view of what functions the University of Cincinnati should fill and where the priorities should be. The signers argued strongly that the university's emphasis should be in nurturing the College of Liberal Arts. The report stated, "Our McMicken College of Liberal Arts must be a true college. Nothing must interfere with its fullest development."

Noting the only partial absorption of the various new schools, the report went on to urge that the professional schools of law, medicine, engineering and teaching should be secondary to McMicken. Their strongest criticism was directed to the graduate school which "should come last." They insisted that they should "go very slow in graduate work."

The report was critical of expenses, citing the fact that the budget (excluding teaching payroll) had doubled in ten years. While new colleges were sprouting, regular class attendance had declined. Twenty-five percent of classes had fewer than five students.

The writers of the report even pondered the ideal qualities of professors—and by extension, university presidents. They quoted Carnegie Foundation President H. S. Pritchett as saying, "No man is likely to choose this life for the love of gain." Dabney, they felt, was far too interested in the perks of office. The report contained tabular exhibits to buttress their case:

We now submit the following as to income, attendance and Presidents' salaries. The figures are for 1907.

University	Pres. Salary	Total Income	All Students	Undergraduates
Chicago	$10,000 & House	$1,304,000	5,070	3,902
Michigan	$7,000 & House	$1,078,000	4,282	2,800
Wisconsin	$7,000 & $1,000 allowance	$998,634	3,116	2,558
Ohio State	$6,000	$475,000	2,014	1,376
Purdue	$5,000	$255,000	1,713	1,605
Indiana	$5,000	$215,000	1,800	Not available
Illinois	$10,000 & House	$1,200,000	3,605	2,281
Cincinnati	$9,900	$254,699	994	638

We are facing for next year a financial deficit in Budget Items alone of $10,000. Unforeseen items can easily make the deficit $12,000. Is there not grave question then, not only as to our right to pay the President a salary of $9,900, in view of our financial condition, but also so to the managerial value of the service in dollars as shown by the salaries paid the heads of the greatest institutions in the West and among the greatest in the world? One with income five times as much, with students five times as many pays but little more than we. Others with incomes about the size of ours, but with twice as many students, pay about one-half as much.

If such men as the Presidents of the Universities named can be secured at the salaries quoted, to do the work involved in administering to the needs of so many students.

Do either the finances or needs of this University justify this Board in paying $9,900 to any President? We think not. Yet one believes in paying a liberal salary and recommend that the salary be fixed at $8,000, with no further stipends or allowances.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernest DuBrul
George Guckenberger
Fred A. Geier

Upon submission of the minority report, Ernest DuBrul moved that the final section on salary be substituted for the report of the committee of the whole. The motion failed four votes to five. Joining the signers of the report was Thomas J. Moffett. Trustees Brown, Carson, Curtis, Hooker and Stewart voted with the majority. A motion was then made and passed that Dabney be elected president of the university, beginning 1 July 1909, at a salary of $9,900 per annum. The vote was eight to one in the affirmative although Messrs. DuBrul, Geier and Moffett stated their votes were given "in the interest of harmony" and directed that this qualification be entered in the minutes. This was too much for trustee Guckenberger, who cast the sole "nay" vote.

Fred Geier's service on the university's board of trustees ended when his term expired during January 1910. On 22 January 1910, a letter to the board of directors from Mayor Louis Schwab announced three new trustees. Presumably, the statutory limit on length of directorships could have been ignored as there were directors before and after Fred Geier who attained more years of service. But there was little philosophical harmony between the university president and the board chairman. Too, it is questionable whether Mayor Schwab, a Cox-machine Republican, would reward Fred Geier, the man who had headed the reform City Party.

CHAPTER V

PHILANTHROPIC ACTIVITIES

My growth will take place in the direction of the things I choose to do, and My character is made up of my acts of choice. I can develop moral worth in so far as I make use of my heritage as a bringer about of changes for the better. I can live creatively and follow in the footsteps of My Maker, if, taking things as I find them, I 'breath upon them' and change them for the better.

Portion of preface to memorial volume,
Frederick August Geier: 1866-1934

While attribution of the above lines was not made, the sentiments encapsulated the philosophy of Fred A. Geier. This chapter focusses on those philanthropic organizations which he and his family chose to aid and where their efforts did bring about "changes for the better." The roots of Fred A. Geier's charitable instincts can be found within his heritage, church, family and associates. His cousin, August Tuechter, felt that Fred's life illustrated the biblical passage, "Cast your bread on the waters and it will return after many days."

However, the fruits of his lifetime of labor in the orchard of good causes are of greater interest than are the sources of his generosity. His contributions made a difference to the works of humanitarian organizations and to the lives of those less fortunate.

DEACONESS HOSPITAL

The Deaconess Hospital in Cincinnati, chartered in 1888, has served residents of the Queen City for over a century. In 1903 it was described as the "oldest Interdenominational Deaconess Home in the United States." Deaconess was a pioneer Cincinnati hospital. And for the first three decades of the hospital's life, it was an institution that was intimately connected with the Geier family. It was the charity on whose board, in the early 1890s, that Fred A. Geier began his pursuit of aiding philanthropies. And it was the institution to which his mother was most devoted. The obituary of Sophia Louise Geier in the *Commercial Gazette* read, "She was one the founders of the Deaconess Hospital, taking an active part in establishing that institution at its old location on East Liberty Street and afterward proving herself one of its strongest supporters when the hospital was moved to its present location."[1]

The concept of German deaconry was introduced to Cincinnati in 1888 when Heinrich Hanhart invited 12 of his ministerial colleagues (German Evangelical, Reformed and Presbyterian ministers) to meet at Zion Evangelical Church at Fifteenth and Bremen Streets in Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine. At the time he urged his colleagues to establish a society to bring German deaconry to Cincinnati. Historian Ellen Corwin Cangi wrote:

> In a long speech Hanhart explained that a deacon was a single woman who dedicated her life to God in the service of the sick poor. Through self-discipline and a thorough knowledge of Scripture, she would bring others closer to God as she alleviated pain and suffering. Upon ordination a deaconess

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[1] "Mrs. Geier Dies at Age of 80 at Son's Home," *Cincinnati Commercial-Tribune,* 25 August 1922, p. 2.

promised to lead a chaste and moral life, but there were no vows and she could resign at will.[2]

Hanhart's proposal to establish a home for deaconesses and a hospital met with approval. On 17 July 1888, a mass meeting of Cincinnati's German Protestants was held at St. Peter's Evangelical Church at McMicken Avenue and Main Street. Those gathered there were invited to join the Evangelical Protestant Society for Deacony (*Evangelisch Protestantisches Verein Fur Diakonie*). Fifty-one of those assembled became charter members and within six months over 500 area residents had joined.

A board of trustees consisting of six ministers and six laymen was elected at the July meeting at St. Peter's Church. It is likely that Philip Geier would have been elected a trustee had he not died the previous year. However, his spouse, Sophia Louise Geier, would fill significant roles in the life of the institution.

The first two deaconess sisters, graduates of the Red Cross Sophian House of Weimar, Germany, arrived in early September. By 1 October 1888, a house was leased at 137 East Liberty Street for $550 a year. It opened as a hospital on 10 October 1888.

By the end of the first year nine probationers had joined the first two deaconesses. These women were in charge of day-to-day management at the hospital. However, the deaconesses appeared to collaborate closely with the Ladies Aid Society, or *Der Damen Verein*, that held its first meeting on 22 September 1888. Cangi wrote, "The first president, Mrs. Philip Geier, organized a committee of women who furnished the house with blankets, sheets, towels, clothing, dishes and all the other items necessary for a well-equipped late nineteenth century hospital."[3]

The *Damen Verein* was more than an auxiliary in the late twentieth-century sense. By and large, it was responsible for the hospital's housekeeping. The original purpose of the *Damen Verein* "was to look after the clothing, laundry and other needs of the household." By 1892 the trustees delegated a control committee of the society to oversee cooking, cleaning and laundry at the hospital. Perhaps the ladies accomplished their tasks too well. In August 1892, Deaconess Superintendent Meyer resigned; he claimed he had nothing to do.

The *Damen Verein* was also involved in fund raising. Each year the ladies held a variety of lawn fetes, kaffee klatsches and dinners. In 1890 a kaffee klatsch, held at Mrs. Philip Geier's home on Ohio Avenue, netted $52.50. In 1897, a year that Mrs. Geier was the society president, a lawn fete at her home earned $221.10. That amount included $13.65 made from the sale of candy and cigars.

Geier family support for the Deaconess Hospital extended, in significant ways, beyond the contributions Louise Geier and her sister, Mrs. Betty Ahlers, made to and through the *Damen Verein*. Henry W. Tuechter, a brother-in-law of Louise Geier Tuechter, was business manager of the hospital from 1 September 1898 until July 1901. Mr. Tuechter was the hospital's finance secretary at the time of his death in the fall of 1916.

The hospital's first medical staff included Fred A. Geier's brother-in-law, Dr. Charles W. Tangeman, who was married to his sister Anna. The Deaconess Hospital medical staff in 1903 totaled 12, including Dr. Tangeman, Dr. Otto P. Geier and Fred A. Geier's brother-in-law, Dr. William H. Crane.

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[2] Ellen Corwin Cangi, "Krankenhaus, Culture and Community: The Deaconess Hospital of Cincinnati, Ohio, 1888-1920," *Queen City Bulletin*, Summer, 1990, p. 3.

[3] Ibid.

Diakoniſſen- und Kranken-Haus.

529—533 Oſt Liberty Straße.

Schweſter Maria Bangerter, ... Oberin.
H. W. Tuechter, ... Superintendent.

Verwaltungsrath:

Paſtor J. Piſter, ... Präſident.
Paſtor H. W. Hortich, . . Protokoll-Sekretär.
Herr J. Schwarz, ... 1. Finanz-Sekretär.
Herr F. A. Geier, ... 2. Finanz-Sekretär.
Herr Auguſt Rover, ... Schatzmeiſter.
Paſtor A. B. Rbinow, . . Korreſp. Sekretär.

Dr. E. Guſtav Zinke, Herr W. H. Dunkmann,
Herr J. Dornette, Herr Gottlieb Erhardt,
Herr Otto H. G. Lippert, Louis Mauß,
Herr F. Johansmann, J. D. Haſemeier,
Paſtor H. Mehl.

Frauen-Hülfs-Verein.

Verwaltungsrath:

Frau Louiſe Geier, ... Präſidentin.
Frau Eliſabeth Bordemfelde, . Vize-Präſidentin.
Frau Auguſt Rover, ... Sekretärin.
Frau Henry Diekmeier, . . . Schatzmeiſterin.

Frau Louiſe Seedorf, Frl. Emma Emigholz,
Frau M. Reuter, Frau J. W. Greenfield,
Frl. Martha Saure, Frau Wm. Bruckmann,
Frau Louis Mauß, Frl. Joan. Johansmann,
Frau S. Straebley, Frau Bettie Ahlers,
Frau E. Bocke, Frau Eliza Knollmann.

Zweig-Hoſpital für Frauen und Kinder,
Ecke Liberty und Logan Str.
Emilie Koch, ... leitende Schweſter.

Deaconess Hospital as it appeared in 1893. Fred A. Geier is listed as second financial secretary (Herr F. A. Geier) and his mother appears as president of the Ladies Aid.

Deaconess Hospital flourished in its first decades. The first building, which contained 27 beds, soon proved to be inadequate for its needs. A second house, formerly the home of the Windisch family, was rented on West Liberty Street. In 1899 the hospital trustees purchased land on which to build a new hospital at the corner of Clifton Avenue and Straight Street. Construction began 24 September 1901 and the building was dedicated on 1 February 1903.

Deaconess Hospital publications reported the story of its new facility with considerable pride. The view from the hilltop hospital's third floor was said to extend from Burnet Woods in the north to the Ohio River and the Kentucky hills in the south. The quiet residential neighborhood and the clean hilltop air were causes of satisfaction.

When Deaconess Hospital moved to Clifton Avenue and Straight Street, there was considerable undeveloped land along Clifton Avenue. Other large hospitals and Hughes High School would, in the following years, also locate there. The surrounding streets often contained substantial homes along with an occasional grand estate. It was in this neighborhood—and only a few blocks from where the hospital would locate after the turn-of-the-century—that Fred A. Geier and his wife, Amanda Mayer Geier, would live from the time of their marriage to around 1898 when they moved to Evans Place in North Clifton.

Historical material about Deaconess Hospital that has been donated to the Cincinnati Historical Society includes a thank-you note written during 1902 to Louise Geier and The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company. The Mill and Mrs. Geier's *Damen Verein* had donated a coffee machine and tableware to the hospital. Mrs. Geier remained a member of the *Damen Verein* board for several more years. A special family interest in the affairs of Deaconess Hospital continued during Louise Geier's lifetime and money for a room at the hospital was given by the family in memory of Mrs. Geier's husband, Philip Geier.

ZION CHURCH

On 16 September 1934, Zion Evangelical Church at the corner of Fifteenth and Republic (it had been named Bremen before the anti-German hysteria of World War I) Streets closed its doors. Few present day passerbys would glance at the still-standing Over-the-Rhine building even if they happened upon this blighted site. Once this building was a center in the religious life of Cincinnati's German Protestants. Indeed, it can be considered to be the "Mother Church" of all the German Evangelical and Reformed Churches (now part of the United Church of Christ) in greater Cincinnati. For nearly eight decades of Zion Church's 91-year-life, Geier family members and, later, various family relatives considered it to be their house of worship.

Fred A. Geier's aunt, Mrs. William (Louisa Geier) Tuechter and her son, August, were among the last to leave the church at its final service in 1934. August Tuechter had been organist and choir director for the previous 42 years. He had been appointed to these roles on 10 February 1892.

Fred A. Geier's father, Philip, had been a delegate from Zion Church to a German Evangelical synod conference when he was fatally stricken with a stroke on 7 May 1887 in Boonville, Indiana. And, in addition to being a prominent layman in Zion's congregation, it may be that Philip Geier had been Zion's organist. There was an organ in the Geier home on Ohio Avenue along with two pianos. Philip Geier was, indeed, a supporter of the musical arts.

An understanding of the historical background of Cincinnati's early German Protestant settlers helps to explain why various Independent, Evangelical and Reformed congregations flourished in the Queen City, while the Lutheran faith was under-represented. For

approximately two decades, from 1795 to Waterloo in 1815, Napoleon dominated most aspects of life on the European continent. The Reverend Conrad Held, who was the official denominational historian of the Indiana District of the Evangelical Church, wrote that after 20 years of warfare there was widespread hunger, a loss of political freedom and religious intolerance. Religion, under state control in many of the numerous German principalities, had become formalistic. In 1817 in the Rhineland Palatinate the Lutheran and Reformed (Calvinist) congregations were pressured to merge into a unitary Protestant church.

Reverend Held wrote:

> Hatred and suspicion of organization and control, state or otherwise was reflected [in] the first so-called 'independent' churches which were formed in Cincinnati early in the nineteenth century. The missionaries who followed immigrants from Germany, because of state interference in church matters, at home, steered clear of any attempt to organize the Evangelical or Reformed churches into synods or districts.[4]

The first independent Protestant church in Cincinnati was St. John Church, which was established in 1814. When it chose a denominational affiliation in 1922, it chose to become Unitarian. The independent church (for many years the congregation worshiped at Twelfth and Elm Streets) was the spiritual home of various Geier relatives and Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company associates. Fred A. Geier's second wife, Juliet Esselborn, was a Unitarian, as were other members of the Esselborn family and various Cranes and Kochs. Various members of the Lotze family, too, had connections with St. John Church although their association predated St. John's affiliation with Unitarianism. The Unitarian Church, although not St. John's, was the denomination attended by various Wurlitzers, a family linked with the Geier family through many generations.

It was not until 1843 that the historic fears held by Cincinnati's early Protestant settlers had ceased sufficiently to permit the establishment, in Reverend Held's words, of the first "real Evangelical Church." That church was Zion. The church had been organized by 16 men three years before the Evangelical Synod was founded. Services were first held in a fire engine hall and at other convenient sites. A church building on Bremen Street was dedicated on 19 May 1844. Nine years later a new church building was built at the corner of Fifteenth and Bremen Streets.

Fred A. Geier's parents and grandparents became members of Zion Church immediately after their move to Cincinnati in the early-1850s. And the church books reveal that it was at Zion that various Geiers, Ottens, Tangemans and Tuechters were married. The first marriage from these families is recorded in 1853.

Friedrich August Geier, the first son and third child of Philip and Sophia Louise Geier was baptized at Zion Church on 26 August 1866 and confirmed on Palm Sunday 1880. All of Fred A. Geier's siblings would be baptized and confirmed at Zion. His three brothers and younger sisters would become communicants at Zion, even after Fred had joined the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church on 28 March 1888.

The Geier family connection with Zion Church had been very strong. Sophia Louise Geier's favorite charity, the Deaconess Hospital, had been established at a meeting at Zion. And even when Fred A. Geier's mother and his six unmarried brothers and sisters transferred to Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church on 1 April 1896, there would still be Geier family

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[4] "Germans, Who Fled Their Homeland in 1815, Founded Evangelical-Reformed Groups Here," *Cincinnati Times-Star*, 30 September 1938, p. 38.

connections with the old church. Sophia Louise Geier's sister, Mrs. Bettie Ahler, remained a member of Zion until her death on 15 November 1930. The Zion connection was even present at Sophia Louise Geier's funeral on 26 August 1922. Herbert Koch wrote in his diary, "Her former pastor, a rugged old man, who knew her 40 years ago, told at length of her good works." Zion's choir was known as "August's choir" as the long-time choirmaster was August H. Tuechter.

When the Zion Evangelical Church ceased to exist, few of the founding German families remained in Over-the-Rhine and many members lived in distant suburban communities. August H. Tuechter, president of Zion's congregation, noted the changing demography when he said to a *Times-Star* reporter, "...we have served for 91 years and now find our work completed in the community."[5]

CLIFFORD CHAPEL - MT. AUBURN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

One might make an issue of Fred A. Geier's transfer from Zion Evangelical Church in 1888 to join by "profession of faith" the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church. It is likely, however, that the change was primarily one of fellowship instead of theological dissatisfaction with the Zion congregation.

A move from a church in crowded Over-the-Rhine to one on a suburban hilltop would have appealed to a man who would later move a factory and charitable institutions from the Cincinnati Basin to suburban and country sites. And for a family deeply grounded in the continental Protestant traditions of John Calvin and Huldrych Zwingli, Fred A. Geier's adoption of the Presbyterian faith of John Knox was merely a religious evolution not a major religious break with the past. It would have been a far greater new beginning had he become a member of a liturgical church: Roman Catholic, Episcopal, or even German Lutheran.

It appears that Fred Geier's religious life was primarily centered at Mt. Auburn's mission in Corryville, the Clifford Chapel. Wood Walter and he were drawn into the life of Clifford Chapel through their Woodward High School classmate, Joseph Henry Cone, the chapel's preacher. The fellowship at Clifford Chapel went beyond the three young Woodward alumni. On 6 December 1893 Joseph Cone married Fred's sister, Emma, and later, on 11 June 1902, Wood Walter married another sibling, Minnie Margaret.

Although Clifford Chapel was where the three Woodward alumni dedicated their talents in the early part of the Gay Nineties, their membership was recorded at the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church. The church, incorporated in 1867, was probably the third built in the community, Methodists and Baptists had organized congregations earlier. The incorporators were men of stature in Cincinnati and included names still familiar more than a century later: Samuel S. Fisher, Judge Edward F. Noyes (later Governor of Ohio), George B. Hollister, George A. McAlpin and Matthew Addy. Mt. Auburn's membership in the 1890s numbered in the hundreds and, according to an 1894 account, had 700 enrolled in Sunday School.

The Rev. Henry F. Curtis, who was minister from 1890 to 1911, held the longest pastorate in the Church's history. An examination of the minister's interests discloses that he and Fred A. Geier had many common causes. He was, as was Geier, a trustee and president of the board of trustees of the University of Cincinnati. He was also a vice president of the Associated Charities. A description of him in a Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church history

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[5] "Work in Community Completed After 91 Years," *Cincinnati Times-Star*, 13 September 1934, p. 40.

notes that, "Dr. Curtis was kind, sympathetic and tactful. He also had good business sense and determination." In short, he appeared to have been a man of purpose and action. With those traits, he surely would have been a kindred soul with his young parishioner. The church history also records that, "Despairing men talked with him about the unreasonable rates of interest charged for personal loans and he became one of the organizers of a reliable and honorable loan and mortgage company." The same needs would also motivate Fred A. Geier when he brought a Morris Plan Bank to Cincinnati.

The Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church books contain numerous entries of Fred A. Geier's children and grandchildren being born and baptized and married by the clergy of the church. There are also entries for the funerals of his mother and several of his siblings. His brothers, Dr. Otto P. Geier and Walter Geier, served terms as church deacons. And both Fred A. and his son Frederick V. Geier were church trustees. Church trustees often acted as financial experts and conducted the church's relationships with various secular bodies and organizations.

Geier family support of the Mt. Auburn Church extended beyond membership, financial contribution and service on governing bodies. The support was most evident in the musical life of the congregation. From 1912 until her death in 1915, Miss Louise Geier was the church's organist and musical director.

Mary Rudd Cochran, in her 1943 church history wrote, "In 1916, the family of Miss Louise A. Geier gave five shares of preferred stock of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company in her memory, the interest to be used to augment and enhance the regular music of the church at the Christmas and Easter service by the use of stringed instruments, 'because of her long devotion to and deep interest in sacred music.'"

After the death of Mrs. Sophia Louise Geier in 1922, her four sons replaced the church's sanctuary organ in their mother's memory. The memorial organ was a three-manual, nine-rank Wurlitzer church organ whose purchase price was $18,000. The contract for the organ was signed 5 June 1922 by Walter Geier, representing the Geier family, and Farny Wurlitzer, president of the Rudolph Wurlitzer Manufacturing Company. Installation was completed 11 December 1922.[6]

The Geier family's love of music was further demonstrated at Mt. Auburn through the musical gifts of Walter Geier. Cochran recorded that, "...special recognition should be given to Mr. Walter Geier, who for twenty years, as a one-man committee, had complete charge of the music, selecting the organists and singers, and giving faithful and conscientious service."

The deaths of Walter Geier on 28 June 1960 and of Norma Geier on 16 March 1967 brought to an end a Geier family association with the church that began with Fred A. Geier's transfer of membership in 1888. Of Fred A. Geier's four children, only Frederick V. Geier made his home in Cincinnati. Shortly before World War II, he and his family resided in suburban Indian Hill a residence they named *Knowethwaite*. On the last day of 1947, Frederick V. Geier and his wife, Amey, transferred their membership to the Indian Hill Presbyterian-Episcopal Church. Frederick V. Geier would leave his mark on a new church in a new community just as his father had at Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church and his grandfather had at Zion German Evangelical Church.

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[6] All organs have a work or "opus" number. The Geier memorial organ is Opus 574. A copy of the contract is in the archives of the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church. Seven additional ranks comprising the choir or echo organ, located in the church balcony, were donated by Mrs. Mary Thoms in memory of her husband.

"Many years ago," Mrs. Fred A. Geier wrote shortly after her husband's death, "Mr. Geier told me how happy he was to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Children's Home 'for' he added, 'there is no work that I love more.' The Home was always particularly dear to Mr. Geier's heart."[7]

The Children's Home was a pioneering institution. In its formative years it instituted the first day care nursery in the United States. Later, in December 1876, the Home established a Kindergarten. It was reported to be the first in America.

Fred Geier's service to the Children's Home began on 17 March 1910 when he was elected a trustee, a vacancy that had been created by the death of William Christie Herron. He continued to be a trustee for the next 24 years. In January 1928, he was elected president of the board of trustees, a position that he held at the time of his death six years later.

That Fred Geier loved children is well known. At family Christmas gatherings, he was always Santa Claus. But his love and concern for children extended beyond his household and family to the neglected and dependent children throughout the Cincinnati community. On some Christmas Eves Fred Geier, along with various family members, would stop in at the Children's Home to spend time with the orphans.

His interest in bettering the lives of homeless children ranged from advocacy of national legislation to specific acts intended to improve the operations at Cincinnati's Children's Home. On 15 December 1910, during his first year as trustee, he presented a resolution to the board urging passage of a bill pending before Congress to create a Federal Children's Bureau.

It was as a representative of the Children's Home that he attended a meeting, at the Christ Episcopal Church parish house, of delegates from the social agencies of Cincinnati. The purpose of this gathering, on 6 March 1911, was to coordinate among the various charity organizations.

According to *The Children's Home Record*, Fred A. Geier considered "his work in connection with the selection and purchase of this [Madison Road] property was one of the more important of his contributions to The Children's Home."

The first three Children's Homes sites were in the inner-city. In 1878 the facility operated from Ninth Street, opposite City Hall. The inner-city location was convenient to serving the homeless, abandoned and needy urban children.

By the time Fred Geier came on the board, some trustees and the Home's Executive, Rev. Meigs V. Crouse, had become advocates of a new "suburban institution." Their reasoning, while clearly understood today, was contested at the time. Crouse argued that the air around the Ninth Street facility was "impregnated with infection, it is thick with dust, smoke and fog" rising from the "20,000 sewer openings [and] 20,000 chimney vents" in the Basin. The site's proximity to drunken men, prostitutes and "worthless relatives" of the children also concerned Crouse.

Not all of the trustees were enthusiastic about a move to the suburbs, and records from 30 December 1912 show trustees Geier and E. A. Stearns, among others, in opposition. The views of Reverend Crouse and other social workers were persuasive, however, and by January 1914 the entire board was in support of moving at least part of the facility out of the inner-city.

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[7] *Frederick August Geier: 1864-1934* (Cincinnati: Privately printed, 1934), 40.

At a meeting on 26 January 1914 the board appointed a committee of Fred Geier, John J. Burchenal and Caleb W. Shipley to formulate definite plans for the proposed Children's Home expansion. In February 1914, the committee proposed the Ninth Street facility be enlarged and also that a country or suburban extension be constructed. These expansions, the board held, would allow the home to reach out "in a systematic canvas, to know that all children who would be benefited by our care, reach us."

Several months later the committee, meeting in Fred Geier's office at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, came to a decision on the country site for the home. The committee considered several locations, but proposed that the home acquire the property of "The Pillars" on Madison Road. Two days afterward, at a meeting of the Children's Home trustees, Fred Geier reported that he had secured an option on The Pillars, a 30-acre tract of land that had been the home of an exclusive social club. A fire that had destroyed The Pillar's clubhouse, which resembled a Georgian-style Southern mansion, was probably the reason that the property had appeared on the real estate market. The purchase price was $22,000. Shortly afterward, nine additional acres lying immediately west of The Pillars were acquired.

GEIER MEMORIAL COTTAGE

The gift of Mr. Fred A. Geier and his children in memory of Mrs. Amanda Virginia Mayer Geier.

The option to buy The Pillars was exercised in early 1915 and construction of five buildings was underway during 1916. The entire cost of one of the buildings, Cottage A, was paid by Fred Geier. Cottage A, or the Geier cottage as it was commonly known, was designed to provide housing for 25 girls. It was built as a memorial to his first wife, Amanda Virginia Mayer Geier.

Fred Geier gave readily of his time to serve the Children's Home. In January 1928, he was elected president of the board. A few months later, in May, he announced that he was giving the home $75,000. This sum was to be used to build a nursery, or should a nursery not

be needed, to be added to the home's invested funds. Known as the Mr. and Mrs. Fred A. Geier Endowment Fund, the income from the fund was to be unrestricted.

A second Geier gift in 1928, $1,000, was designated for an independent review of the needs of the Children's Home. The donation became the basis for a fund used to contract the Child Welfare League of America to examine the home's work *vis-a-vis* other community child-care organizations.

Rev. John Bayne Ascham was the home's chief executive from 1928-1943. He was hired during the period when Fred Geier, as president of the board, had the chief responsibility for the home. Ascham quickly realized one of Geier's greatest assets, namely his willingness to devote the time necessary to those things he held dear. At the time of Fred Geier's death, John Ascham wrote of his friend, "One of the busiest of men, he always appeared to have abundant time to confer with the trustees and the superintendent in regard to the needs of the Home."[8]

THE COMMUNITY CHEST

Organized charity in Cincinnati is in large part the work of the United Way and Community Chest. The man credited with being the "Father of the Community Chest movement in Cincinnati" is Fred A. Geier. In 1911 he became the first permanent chairman of the conference of charities and philanthropies, a newly-formed committee designed to foster cooperation between organizations dedicated to social service. This early organization is considered to be the first continuous organization of its kind in the United States.

The conference of charities and philanthropies was one of several organizations credited with containing the seeds from which the Community Chest grew. Clarence M. Bookman, executive director of the Community Chest, 1917-1947, wrote in his history of the organization, *The First Twenty Years 1915-1935*:

> It is interesting to note that in the subsequent history of all organized social work in this city, until the time of his death in 1934, the name of Mr. Geier appears as one who held the confidence of his fellow citizens and who maintained an intelligent and unswerving interest in the social welfare of his community.

From 1911 through December 1920, the evolution and development of the Community Chest is in large part a chronicle of Fred Geier's labor in this field. The objectives adopted by the conference of charities and philanthropies were keenly felt and shared by Geier. They were to:

> (1) insure cooperation between existing service groups;
> (2) increase the efficiency of the work being done by them;
> (3) reduce expenditures whenever this could be done without sacrifice of efficiency; and
> (4) bring about a more equitable distribution of support among the different agencies.

The organization of social work in the community, both by private institutions and by the municipality, was a matter of grave concern, as is apparent from the findings of William J. Norton, the man who became the first executive secretary of the Cincinnati

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[8] John Ascham, *Children's Home Record* 65, no. 4 (April 1934):5.

Community Chest. Prior to coming to the Queen City, Norton had been secretary of the department of charities and corrections in Cleveland. Norton headed a survey that revealed, for example, that six private welfare organizations spent $10,000 to collect $60,000; and that if half of Cincinnati's leading donors ended their support, half of the city's social service organizations would face bankruptcy.

Norton's survey concluded by proposing a plan for federated financing for the "Council of Social Agencies" that would be introduced in the campaign for 1915. This may be considered to be the beginning of a cooperative plan of fund raising by the agencies.

Items of the cooperative fund-raising plan are listed below. They comprise the core of present-day United Way and Community Chest campaigns which incorporate many of the 1915 points. Fred Geier was president of the council of social agencies when the first joint campaign was approved and undertaken. Items in Norton's plan were:

1. In the spring of 1915, the budget campaigns should unite under the leadership of the Council of Social Agencies.
2. The budget of each agency should be submitted to a central budget committee composed of one representative of each cooperating board.
3. A pledge sheet should be prepared to afford the giver the opportunity of designation.
4. Each participating organization should agree not to solicit separately any giver in the cooperative plan.
5. Preliminary publicity and its circulation should come from the Council office.
6. The collection of pledges, sending of receipts, bookkeeping, etc., should be handled through the Council.
7. Undesignated funds should be distributed through the budget committee.
8. Continuous educational campaigns should be carried out.
9. The Council should be supported from undesignated funds.[9]

Although there were 60 social service, benevolent and charitable organizations endorsed by the council of social agencies, it was not possible to include all of them in the first campaign. Fortunately, only a fifth of the eligible agencies dared to risk their finances to the first federation experiment in fund-raising. These twelve agencies combined to launch the first federated campaign under the direction of chairman Geier. The inaugural campaign, held 20-28 May, raised $46,286 to finance the agencies' expenses for six months. Equally important was the fact that the donor list increased by 457 givers to total 1,130. In addition, previous donors increased their contributions by 30 percent. While the May campaign was designed for six-months' funding, a fall campaign conducted from 18-30 November 1915 raised money for calendar year 1916. This time 21 agencies participated and $124,000 was raised. An additional 1,5671 contributors were recorded.

A third campaign, conducted during November 1916 for calendar year 1917 achieved spectacular results. A total of $215,000 was raised from 10,500 givers, an increase of 7,600 contributors. The large increase in donors was attributed to "an experimental solicitation of

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[9] Julie Ann Mooney, "Private Welfare and the Cincinnati Community Chest, 1915-1956," (M.A. thesis, University of Cincinnati, 1966), 44-45.

industrial workmen at their benches in two or three large factories." Fred Geier was still chairman and it seems certain that The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was one of the pioneer factories.

Few years were as momentous in the council of social agencies as 1917. William J. Bookman resigned his position as director to accept the directorship of the Associated Charities of Detroit. He was succeeded by C. M. Norton, a man who would become a national figure in social welfare circles. Mr. Bookman would direct the council of social agencies and, later, the Community Chest during Geier's lifetime and for a decade afterward. The two men were true friends and would even travel to Europe together on a vacation in the late 1920s. Mr. Bookman said, "We planned and worked as one for the things in which we both believed."

On 6 April 1917 the United States entered into World War I. Because the national Y.M.C.A. was attempting to raise $35,000,000 in 1917 for war work ($450,000 was Cincinnati's quota) the budget committee of the council of social agencies decided to combine forces in a joint campaign with the local Y.M.C.A. Of the $1,672,829 pledged during the drive, the 27 participating council agencies received $250,000 from 12,864 donors. The council was pleased with its share as it had previously agreed to receive only "designated gifts."

Fred Geier chaired the budget committee of the council of social agencies from 1915 through the 1917 joint campaign with the Y.M.C.A. The joint drive in 1917 and 1918 was known as the "War Chest." The War Chest was designation became inappropriate after the Armistice in November 1918, was renamed the Community Council and was finally designated the Community Chest on 27 September 1920.

There is one earlier example of a collaborative effort between those active in the council of social agencies and those working on behalf of the Y.M.C.A. that deserves to be noted as it was "unique to those days." In 1914 the Y.M.C.A. directors decided to build a new facility. The cost for the central building was estimated at $500,000 and the money was to be raised during a whirlwind crusade during ten days in May. The then existing Y.M.C.A., built in 1890 at Seventh and Walnut Streets, was found to be inadequate by officials of the State and International Y committees who reported, "Although but twelve cities in the country exceed Cincinnati in population, there are more than one hundred cities which outclass yours in the provision made by citizens for equipment...."

Eyebrows were raised throughout the Queen City when the campaign was announced. No one had ever raised, at least not in Cincinnati, such a sum of money in such a short time. Both the national and local Y went all out in this fund raiser and key personnel were relieved of normal duties to devote their efforts to the drive. Two hundred of the most prominent Cincinnati professionals and businessmen were organized into 20 teams. It is as a team captain that Fred Geier excelled. "Indefatigable leaders of the campaign," as recorded in the Y.M.C.A. Board minutes, were D. B. Meacham, James P. Orr, Frederick A. Geier and Barney H. Kroger.

The whirlwind campaign succeeded and was quickly adopted by many other Cincinnati charitable drives. It must be noted, however, that it was literally an 11th hour donation that took the drive to the top. At 11 p.m., one hour before the end of the ten day period, Mrs. Mary Emery called the fund-drive chairman and pledged to meet the goal. She added $11,217 to a sum of $50,000 that she had previously committed to the drive.

Cincinnati leaders lauded Geier's support for the Y.M.C.A. drive. And 75 years later P. Willard Crane would recall that this drive was one that gave his uncle a feeling of great satisfaction and accomplishment. A photo was taken of the four drive captains (Meacham, Orr, Geier, and Kroger) that has been reproduced in various publications. Both the Y.M.C.A. and today's United Way claim the photo as their own.

These business leaders played a key role in the founding of the Cincinnati Community Chest in 1915. Left to right: F. A. Geier, J. P. Orr, D. B. Meacham and B. H. Kroger.

In December 1920, Geier relinquished the chairmanship of the council of social agencies. He had been, without any break, the chairman of the Council and of its predecessor, the conference of charities and philanthropies, since 28 April 1911. He would remain active in the Community Chest, serving as a member of its executive committee from December 1920, until his death.

In 1921 the Community Chest began to elect yearly a citizen to "honorary membership" in recognition of outstanding and unselfish service to the public. The first honoree was Fred A. Geier.

As a member of the Community Chest's executive committee and as an intimate of director Bookman, Geier continued to guide the Chest. It seems reasonable to assume that he concurred in the Chest's purchase, for its headquarters, of the old Children's Home property at Ninth and Plum Streets. He had, after all, been instrumental in obtaining the home's grounds on the road to Madisonville.

Fred Geier's close connection with the Community Chest continued to the time of his death. At his funeral service an eloquent eulogy was given by C. M. Bookman. The Community Chest director's remarks touched on varied aspects of Geier's character and civic contributions. In Bookman's words, Fred Geier, "In his service for others caught the very

spirit of charity—that noble old Latin word *Caritas*—Love. Fred Geier loved his fellow-men and in this he shared in the charity of that life upon which his own was founded."[10]

In 1959, a quarter-century after his death, an "enduring testimonial" to Fred A. Geier and to his surviving widow, Juliet, was being considered by Frederick V. Geier and other officers at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company. By this time Fred Geier had long been recognized as the father of the Community Chest in Cincinnati. And Juliet Geier had carried on her husband's backing and was, in the words of the Community Chest president at the time, Jacob E. Davis, a "staunch supporter of the Community Chest."

It was decided that the living memorial would be a new home for the Community Chest. It would cost $1,300,000. The Community Chest's operations had remained at the old Children's Home building at 312 West Ninth Street. An urban renewal project was now slated to level the structure and the over 100-year-old building was described in the press as being "just plain seedy." The new Community Chest headquarters would be a four-story limestone-faced building at 2400 Reading Road. The building had housed the Ohio National Life Insurance Company.

The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company and the Geier family took the lead in pledging $760,000 toward the purchase of the new $1,300,000 home. It was the largest and the most important pledge.[11] The new building, Frederick V. Geier noted, would commemorate the devotion of Fred and Juliet Geier to the Chest. It would also "...be an enduring symbol of the purpose of the Community Chest and Council...to foster the spirit of community service."[12]

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[10] C. M. Bookman eulogy delivered at the funeral of Fred A. Geier, 29 March 1934. Text appears in *Frederick August Geier; 1864-1934* (Cincinnati,: Privately printed, 1934), 43-46.

[11] During the spring of 1960 the Community Chest sold a two-story apartment building and three vacant lots on Grandview Avenue for $75,000. The parcels had been donated to the Chest, as part of the Geier family pledge, to help toward the purchase of the new Chest headquarters. A press account in the 19 May 1960 *Cincinnati Enquirer* related that the Fred A. Geier homestead at 2301 Grandview had also been given to the Chest and was to be sold.

[12] "'The Mill' Honors Chest's Father," *Cincinnati Enquirer,* 23 July 1959, p, 30.

Above: Artists' sketch of the new Community Chest headquarters. Pictured at the dedication ceremony of 8 November 1961 (from left to right) Frederick V. Geier, Helen Geier Flynt, Virginia Geier McCurdy and Paul Esselborn Geier.

CHAPTER VI

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Fred A. Geier was a man of many facets. His achievements in industry, philanthropy and civic endeavors are widely recognized. Few, however, are aware that Fred Geier was for a time a force in municipal and national politics. He was a man who never held an elective or appointive political office. He was never a delegate to a national political convention. Yet he directed a reform party, the City Party, in the Cincinnati mayoral campaign of 1907 and he labored as the chairman of the national Prosperity League in the presidential campaign of 1912.

Nothing specific is known of the earliest politics of the Geiers but there is no reason to doubt that he was reared as a Republican. German-Americans showed a strong disposition to support the Republican Party of Abraham Lincoln, Carl Schurz and free labor. His uncle, John F. Otten, was a veteran of the Grand Army of the Republic. The Democrat Party, perhaps unfairly brushed with rebellion and Romanism during political campaigns in the late nineteenth century, would not be the political home for the Geiers, prosperous Protestant burghers of Cincinnati.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1896

The presidential campaign during the fall of 1896 was unlike any other in United States history. While the decade of the 1890s is romanticized as the "Gay Nineties," the reality was that it was a time of tension and a fluctuating economy. Not long after Democrat Grover Cleveland moved into the White House, the stock market collapsed. In 1893 there were a record number of bank failures (583), and numerous bankruptcies. During the worst months of the 1890s the economy functioned at 25 percent below capacity. The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was said, by Bud Sands, to have been closed for months during 1893. However, reports of the Mill's closing may have been exaggerated, as payroll ledgers and other company books indicate some production during most of the year. Most likely, veteran employee Sands was reflecting upon a personal or departmental layoff instead of the Mill's closing.

By the fall of 1896 agrarian unrest and union organizational efforts were widespread. To the perennial political issue of tariff policy was added the question of currency standard. The silver question divided the United States politically as well as sectionally like nothing since the slavery issue 36 years earlier. It resulted in a silver man, William Jennings Bryan, receiving the Democratic presidential nomination. However, the East and the Middle West were committed to the gold standard, and many financiers, businessmen and merchants looked upon the defeat of Bryan and the election of William McKinley as a holy mission.

During the election of 1916, Fred Geier's brother-in-law, George Mayer, reminisced about the tumultuous times in 1896. He wrote that, "More than once it (foreign trade) saved us, when the domestic trade dwindled to almost nothing, notably in eighteen ninety-six, when Bryan was first nominated on a Free Silver Platform." Across the land some companies had even inserted clauses subjecting purchase orders to cancellation if Bryan won. Mayer wrote further about the effect of the 1896 campaign on the Mill:

> From the moment the Democratic party adopted its platform and nominated Bryan in June, until the day after (the) election in November, we

didn't receive domestic orders sufficient to cover the pay roll for two weeks and remember in those days we employed only about one hundred men.

That campaign was, without question, the most stirring and exciting, the country had experienced since the Civil War. Everybody was active in it, even the women and children. In the great parade of October, every man from the President of our Company down to the youngest boy, marched behind a beautiful silk flag, presented by our employees.[1]

By all accounts the election parade of 31 October 1896 was one that happens only once in a generation. The merchants and business men declared that Saturday, a day of work in the nineteenth century, to be a holiday. The *Cincinnati Commercial* estimated that 51,275 marched in the parade and recorded that it took three hours for the procession to pass.

"There have been many demonstrations and magnificent street parades in the history of the city, but none ever equalled in splendor, variety and enthusiasm the one which was witnessed by fully half a million people." So exclaimed the pro-McKinley *Cincinnati Commercial*. In its extensive coverage of the parade the newspaper recorded, "The transparency of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's cohorts displayed the *Cincinnati Enquirer's* words on the day after the election of Governor McKinley, three years ago: 'Oh God, how it snowed ballots.' Others were: 'Stop Bryan's Wheels and Give the Factory Wheels a Chance,' 'Honest Money for Honest Work,' 'Machinists Know the Value of Good Metal,' 'Sound Money is Not Too Good for Us.'"[2]

While Fred Geier was undoubtedly rallying the Mill's workers, probably the first of his many presidential election exhortations, his brother Otto was organizing the medical students at the University of Cincinnati. The *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune* reported, "A heavy drum corps preceded, the white capped, gold-corded University of Cincinnati students. There were ninety-five from the medical department under command of Captain A. P. Geyer (sic), and seventy-five from the academic department."[3]

There were a lot of smiles at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company after the election. McKinley, high tariffs and hard money had carried the day. George Mayer wrote, "The day after the elections, when it was known that the Democratic ticket had been overwhelmingly defeated, domestic orders began to pour in."[4]

There is not the slightest suggestion that Fred Geier ever deserted the national Republican ticket. But it is likely that the Geiers voted the man and not the party in municipal elections even before the turn-of-the-century. Col. Gustav Tafel was a reform Democrat mayor in Cincinnati from 1897 to 1900. A native of Germany, Colonel Tafel had been a founder of the *Turngemeinde*, a German gymnastic association. It is said that Colonel Tafel took exceptional pleasure in leading his spike-helmeted German-American militia battalion in parades as he did at the dedication of Fountain Square.

One of Colonel Tafel's homefront accomplishments was aiding in the rearing of his ten children. Some of his daughters were considered to be most attractive. So attractive that

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[1] George A. Mayer, Letter to Fred A. Geier for his birthday in 1916. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[2] *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*, 1 November 1896, p. 2.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Mayer, Op. Cit.

Fred's brother, Otto Geier, was at the Tafel residence almost every night. Willard Crane recalled hearing that Colonel Tafel offered young Geier a commission as guardian watchman of the hearth. Of course, Otto P. Geier had an excuse for seemingly always being in Colonel Tafel's neighborhood. From 1893-1897 the Fred A. Geier family lived on the same street, University Court, as did the Tafels.

CITY POLITICS AND THE CITY PARTY

To understand Fred Geier's entrance into Cincinnati politics and his chairmanship of the City Party during the 1907 mayoral campaign, it is necessary to have an overview of the Cincinnati political scene at the turn of the century. From the late 1880s onward the Queen City was controlled by the Republican Party's boss, George B. Cox. Although Cox served only one elected term, as a city councilman when he was in his 20s, for approximately 30 years he had many city officials and workers ready to do his bidding. Writing in the July 1905 issue of *McClure's* magazine Lincoln Steffen recorded, "The city is all one great graft, Cox's system is the most perfect thing of its kind in this country, and he is proud of it." In the opinion of Steffen, Cincinnati was the worst governed city in America.

At times, most notably in 1896 and 1905 mayoral elections, "reform" candidates were able to upset the Republican Party candidate for mayor. These victories were the result of coalitions of Democrats, Independents and Reform Republicans. But the victories proved hollow, as the coalition allies invariably fell apart and bickered. While the reform administrations were less corrupt, they were, in many aspects, also less effective than those backed by Boss Cox.

This was certainly the case in September 1905, when a reformer, Edward J. Dempsey, became the unanimous choice to head the Democratic ticket in the mayoral campaign. Radicals and conservatives suppressed their differences to unite against George B. Cox's candidate.

While the Democrats were united in 1905, the GOP was split. Cincinnati's favorite son, William Howard Taft, at the time Secretary of War, gave his blessing for Republicans to bolt the party ticket. Speaking in Akron, Ohio, shortly before the election, Secretary Taft said that, "If I were able to vote in Cincinnati in the coming election, I should vote against the municipal ticket nominated by the Republican organization." Taft's remarks sealed the fate of Republican Gordon who received 34,335 votes to Democrat Dempsey's 40,865 ballots. The affluent hilltop neighborhoods voted for Dempsey and only the inner-city wards were solid for Gordon.

Election night may have been one of the few happy times for Edward Dempsey. The Democrats wanted loyal party workers installed in city posts, while the Reform Republicans sought the elimination of partisanship from municipal government. But the machine Republicans, who held a majority in City Council, stood firm against changing the old ways of doing business.

Mayor Dempsey was an attorney, a municipal court judge, and a friend of the famous lawyer Clarence Darrow. But the mayor was accused of nepotism when it became known that there were 34 Dempseys on the City payroll. The mayor responded that only nine of the Dempseys were relatives and that he had appointed only one.

In addition there was a breakdown of city services, most notably a four-month "water famine." The absence of water pressure and clean water was felt particularly in the hilltop communities. Near the end of his term, Mayor Dempsey heard from a delegation of irate housewives who protested that they had to stop taking baths and were reduced to using the drippings from their ice boxes.

While characterized Cincinnati politics, the Gay Nineties and the first decade of the twentieth century witnessed the flourishing of business organizations devoted to community betterment. The two forces would clash in the 1907 mayoral campaign.

In 1908 Elliott H. Pendelton, the nephew of former Senator George Pendleton, and editor of a reform weekly newspaper titled the *Citizens Bulletin,* would claim that since 1903 there had been "a complete change in the attitude of business organizations...relative to municipal affairs." Business organizations, he noted, had finally come to recognize the "intimate connection between the public schools and the factory, between sanitary tenements, pure water, wholesome milk, parks, playgrounds etc.—the result of efficient and progressive government—and business prosperity."

On 1 October 1907, the Democrats held their city convention and renominated Edward Dempsey for mayor and Frank L. Pfaff for vice mayor. Some at the convention would have liked to see Pfaff as the mayoral nominee but they were crushed nearly three-to-one. Two days later, nine of the Democratic nominees for municipal office, including Pfaff, withdrew from the Democratic ticket. They declared that they would not battle one Republican boss with the machinations of another. A delegation of independent Democrats and reform Republicans attempted to persuade Dempsey to withdraw from the race. They were rebuffed.

The delegation then decided to put up its own candidates who would run under a City Party label. A committee of 50 was given the task of designing the slate. The committee was comprised predominately of Republicans and included many businessmen and professionals. All 50 lived on the City's periphery, with most being residents of the northeastern hilltop neighborhoods. Fred A. Geier and Otto P. Geier were prominent members of the committee of 50, which also included Democrat Elliott H. Pendleton and such influential businessmen as James N. Gamble, Ernest G. DuBrul, F. E. LeBlond, Alfred Nippert, Henry Yeiser and D. B. Meacham. The committee also included three prominent Protestant ministers, a rabbi and the editor of the *Catholic Knights of America Journal.*

The committee persuaded Pfaff to be their mayoral candidate. Condemning the bosses of both the Democratic and Republican parties, the City Party adopted the slogan, "A dollar's worth of government for every dollar's worth of taxes." The committee rejected partisanship in municipal affairs because its members looked upon Cincinnati as "a great corporation," which they felt "should be managed as all other corporations are managed—on strictly business principles." The views mirrored those of Fred Geier who was chosen to be the City Party's chairman.

Both the *Cincinnati Post* and Pendleton's *Citizen's Bulletin* swung behind the new party and were, publicly at least, optimistic about its election day prospects. The *Citizen's Bulletin* enthused about a Music Hall City Party rally, "The people in their might were there. It was the largest, the most enthusiastic gathering of Cincinnatians that ever gathered in Music Hall. And it gives assurance of a great victory for the City Party ticket." The paper's reporter was equally complimentary about chairman Geier. He wrote:

> Few men ever presided at a public meeting with such ease, grace and happy tact as Mr. Geier displayed. And right here it should be said that this meeting demonstrated one thing and that is: Cincinnati has an enormous amount of talent among its businessmen—talent that has not heretofore been available for the betterment of our city because of the supremacy and the tyranny of the autocratic bossism that has prevented these men of superior

ability from coming to the front. Bossism recruits its forces from the ranks of mediocrity.[5]

Mayor Dempsey did not take the defections from his slate calmly. The Democrats reorganized their ticket, replacing two of them with members of the Central Labor Council. The mayor lashed out at former allies and labelled City Party members as "autocrats." He called one defecting official from his administration as "a smoker, a drinker, a member of the Queen City Club, and a man who did not know his business."

The beneficiary from the squabbles between the Democrats and the City Party was Boss Cox's Republican machine. The GOP organization nominated a highly-regarded German-American, Leopold Markbreit, who was editor of the *Volksblatt* and water commissioner. As "outsiders" the Republicans were well positioned to attack the mistakes of the incumbents. The Republican regulars were united against a divided opposition.

When the ballots were counted, the Republican candidates had won by majorities of 9,000-12,000 votes over the combined totals of the Democratic and City Party opponents. Boss Cox welcomed the results as the "greatest victory for Republicanism known in Cincinnati." Other observers, however, lamented that "the collar of the boss was once again around the city's neck."

HENRY HUNT ELECTED MAYOR IN 1910; DR. OTTO P. GEIER APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF CHARITIES

The 1910 municipal elections witnessed yet another attempt to clean up and to reform politics in the Queen City and to oust the GOP machine of George B. Cox. The Democrats united behind a young attorney, Henry Hunt, who was the son of wealthy Clifton parents and a graduate of Yale University and of the University of Cincinnati Law School. Hunt, who had been elected Hamilton County prosecutor in 1908, had attempted to convict Boss Cox of perjury in testimony Cox had given to a committee of the state legislature. While the case would eventually be dismissed by a Cox-appointed judge, the trial was said to have shattered Cox's spirit.

The GOP standard for mayor was carried by Dr. Louis Schwab who had been the Hamilton County coroner. Schwab and the rest of the GOP ticket were selected by the Republican Advisory Committee assisted by former Mayor Julius Fleischmann, *Times-Star* Publisher Charles P. Taft and his brother, President William Howard Taft.

Hunt would ignore Schwab in the fall campaign and instead assert that an alliance "now exists between the vicious and criminal classes and the so-called Republican organization."[6] Hunt promised an honest administration, one that would combine economy with community improvement. He successfully courted independent Republican businessmen and professionals who lived in the "hilltops" or suburban sectors of the city. If Fred Geier and his brothers played any role in Hunt's election, they did so with a very low profile. Some of their associates and friends, however, were openly in Hunt's camp. William Cooper Procter donated $500 to Hunt's campaign and Franklin Alter, president of the American Machine Tool Company, gave $200. Also publicly supporting Hunt were Republicans F. F. and Richard K. LeBlond, D. B. Meacham, Murray Shipley and Edwin Holz.

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[5] *Citizens's Bulletin*, 19 October 1907, p. 2.

[6] Zane L. Miller, *Boss Cox's Cincinnati: Urban Politics in the Progressive Era*, p. 209.

Hunt triumphed on election day, beating Schwab with a plurality of 43,673 to 39,771 votes. His victory statement pledged to see that "the city departments are conducted on a basis of scientific management which will make for highest efficiency....I will see," he promised, that the city gets "a business government."[7]

It was to be a business government dedicated to social progress. Hunt established a new department of charities and corrections to help carry out his program of social uplift. Appointed to direct the new department was Dr. Otto P. Geier, who had cut his teeth on consumer issues and politics after the turn-of-the-century when he battled for pure-milk legislation.

The chronicle of Dr. Geier's labors during the Mayor Hunt's administration (1911-1913) is important for an understanding of Fred Geier's good works. The studies undertaken and the experiences Dr. Geier received during his time at City Hall would be a basis for much of the Geiers subsequent social welfare undertakings at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, with the Community Chest, and through the Morris Plan Bank.

Dr. Geier shared with Mayor Hunt a view that the condition of the city's citizenship was as legitimate a municipal function as was the health of its inhabitants. Dr. Geier contended "bad government" bred "delinquents to fill our refuges for children, miscreants to fill our jails, vagrants to clog our streets, diseased to fill our hospitals," and "paupers our almshouses."[8]

If bad government helped breed social ills, constructive social work ameliorated the citizens' condition. Dr. Geier, unlike many late twentieth century conservatives, did not endorse a limited role for municipal government. Professor Zane Miller wrote:

> To Geier "constructive" social work included not only helping the unfortunate—and persuading the unfortunate to cooperate in that task—but also "fighting" those who prey on the miserable; it means the opposition of the loan shark and the employment shark; the ill will of the evil landlord, of the self-seeking politician and gamblers. "It means," he contended, "a constant struggle against the current of tradition, experience and practice.[9]

Dr. Geier was a man of action as well as of words. As superintendent of the department of charities and correction, he was in complete charge over the house of refuge, an institution housing dependent and delinquent children. He instituted a policy of placing dependents in private homes in order that the house of refuge would be solely a correctional institution. The house of refuge's inhabitants were also "scientifically" classified and its records updated. He introduced a parole system and transferred education at the house to the jurisdiction of the board of education. The manual training shop was reopened and courses in domestic science were added. The regimen of military drill and discipline was discarded. Students wrote, edited and printed their own newspaper. Individual flower or vegetable plots were available and new playground equipment purchased. A dental office was opened as a supplement to the medical care program.

There were fewer innovations at the other institutions under the department's jurisdiction. There was an effort made at the workhouse (city jail) to extend the parole system and to allow the prisoners more freedom within the institution. Abuses at the infirmary were

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[7] Ibid., pp. 1073-1074.

[8] Ibid., p. 1086.

[9] Ibid., p. 1087.

curtailed when clients were checked more closely for eligibility for admission and treatment. Non-residents were turned away. Blacks, who had been housed in the "wretched environment of an old building" were transferred into the hospital. Dr. Geier also quickly ended an Infirmary practice of distributing liquor to induce inmates to work. He expressed shock that 60,000 drinks were given out in 1911.

Through Dr. Geier's efforts, city council authorized a municipal drug store at the city hospital to purchase and distribute pharmaceuticals to all city institutions. And the plight of beasts of burden was not ignored. The doctor established a "central municipal veterinary hospital" to care for the sick horses in the city's department.

Under Dr. Geier the department of charities and correction inaugurated a new Bureau of Social Investigation and Relief. The bureau investigated some areas that it might have been politically prudent to avoid. The bureau was instrumental in eliminating the overseers of the poor. It was determined that the overseers were politically corrupt and their duties were turned over to the associated charities, which at the time was headed by Fred Geier.

The bureau aided Mayor Hunt's campaign against the city's loan sharks. The bureau's campaign of education was intended to "teach the ignorant and the unfortunate" how illegal operators abused garnishee proceedings and charged unreasonable rates. A revision of the state's usury laws was advocated in order that "the poor, as well as the rich" could borrow money safely.

The bureau's survey of municipal welfare problems concluded that 70 percent of the city's institutional population came from the "most congested portion of the tenement districts." Some of the bureau's activities resulted in spectacular publicity, although not necessarily a good press, for Mayor Hunt and Dr. Geier. When 20 to 50 shacks were set afire in the Mill Creek bottom Shanty Town, there was sensational publicity in the newspapers. The bureau and Dr. Geier had concluded that Shanty Town was a health menace. The associated charities had found homes elsewhere throughout the city for the shacks' inhabitants.

The initiatives taken by the bureau, Dr. Geier and Mayor Hunt were sometimes controversial and, consequently, made enemies. Meanwhile the remnants of the old GOP machine was biding its time. The bureau's effort in weeding out "unworthy" patients at the city hospital and the sanitorium provided the setting for a clash between a police court judge and Dr. Geier.

In the fall of 1912, as a mayoral election loomed, Judge Fricke ordered a 62-year-old women to be sent to the city infirmary. She had been arraigned in the judge's court on a minor charge. But she was denied admission to the infirmary, as Dr. Geier explained, because on previous occasions she had acted in an unruly manner. Dr. Geier declared the woman to be an alcoholic and a disturber.

Judge Fricke would not countenance such a refusal and the *Cincinnati Enquirer* carried a colorful account of the encounter. The story, which cast the antagonists in black and white, began, "The unwillingness of Police Court Judge Fricke to see an aged woman, almost blind, thrown into the streets of the city, opposed by the desire for cold, technical procedure on the part of Dr. Otto Geier, Superintendent of Charities and Corrections, occasioned a dramatic scene in Police Court yesterday morning when the men stated their views on the subject in open court."

The judge again ordered the woman to be sent to the infirmary and took up a collection from among the spectators and court workers to provide additional comforts for her. The collection netted $17, including a $5 bill from a spectator described as a "woman of the underworld." When Dr. Geier subsequently addressed the court he accused Judge Fricke of "playing to the gallery." The judge then ordered a court officer to remove Dr. Geier from the court if he "did not instantly demean himself with propriety." Dr. Geier concluded that

nothing was to be gained by staying and left the courtroom. The judge further remarked that he was disgusted with "the lack of charity silk-stocking aristocracy." The remarks were undoubtedly intended for Mayor Hunt as well.

Mayor Hunt's administration was widely recognized as one that dealt courageously with the real needs of Cincinnati. Mayor Hunt, in the opinion of the *Christian Science Monitor*, made the Queen City one of the most progressive cities in the West. Nevertheless, Mayor Hunt was defeated for re-election in the fall of 1912. Cincinnati lacked a tradition of returning reform mayors, even the rare reform mayor who proved to be efficient. Civic improvements came with a price; more voters valued low taxes over modern municipal government.

Mayor Hunt's defeat meant that Dr. Geier was out of a job. In his two-year term he responded intelligently to many of Cincinnati's social challenges. William J. Norton, the first director of the Cincinnati Council of Social Agencies [a forerunner of the Community Chest] penned this assessment of Dr. Geier's record:

> Not the least service he has rendered to Cincinnati is a widespread awakening of the community to an interest in its social problems, through a well-conducted publicity campaign. In fact, to this aroused interest may be directly traced the determination of the new administration to retain this new department in its entirety, with its efficient methods and non-partisan staff.[10]

THE 1912 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND THE PROSPERITY LEAGUE

There would never be any doubt that Fred Geier would support and vote for William Howard Taft in his reelection bid. Taft, after all, represented conservative Republicanism in a campaign in which his major opponents, Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, were popularly identified as liberals or progressives. Taft and Fred Geier were both graduates of Woodward High School. They also were members of the Cincinnati Commercial Club. It was with the Commercial Club that Geier had traveled to the White House in 1911 to help celebrate President and Mrs. Taft's silver wedding anniversary. "Home pride" was important in the "Queen City."

But the issue that propelled Geier to take an active and prominent role in Taft's reelection effort was that perennial issue of national politics: the tariff. On 13-14 February 1912, Geier, representing the National Machine Tool Builders' Association, testified before the U.S. Senate Finance Committee that was considering new tariff legislation. The legislation, sponsored by Senator Underwood and popularly known as the Steel Bill, would have placed machine tools, printing presses, sewing machines, typewriters, linotype and all typesetting machines and cash registers on the free list. That meant imports would be tariff-free, a considerable change from the 30 percent then in effect under the Payne-Aldrich tariff of 1909.

With machine tool manufacturing concentrated in Taft's hometown and cash registers being a major product up the Great Miami River valley in Dayton, the legislation appeared to be designed to cause distress to the industries of Ohio if passed. Taft was also aware that he would be politically embarrassed across the land if Congress passed legislation that he felt he must veto.

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[10] William J. Norton, "Dr. Geier's Work in the Cincinnati Department of Charities," *Survey* 32 (9 May 1914): p. 178.

Despite the testimony of Geier and the lobbying by machine tool builders, the Underwood Act passed and was vetoed by President Taft. However, a congressional attempt to override the veto failed. Cincinnati manufacturers and others in threatened industries throughout the state were relieved that the congressional override had failed. Philip O. Geier said, "Machine tool manufacturers of Cincinnati, as well as all of their employees, may well be thankful that the effort to have Congress pass the steel tariff bill over the veto of President Taft failed."[11]

It was gratitude for the veto, certainly, that linked President Taft and machine tool builder Fred Geier in the President's reelection effort. Without Taft's veto, the machine tool builders contended that they would have been wiped out.

The *Times-Star's* reporter provided front page coverage of what he described as one of the "most important conferences" of the present campaign:

> In order to express to President Taft his thanks for saving this great American industry, Mr. Geier journeyed to Washington yesterday. He took lunch at the White House as the guest of Mr. Taft. But Mr. Geier was anxious to do more than to give verbal expression to his appreciation. He had formulated a plan of more practical gratitude, and he wished to talk it over with the President. The opportunity being lacking in Washington, the President invited his guest to accompany him to New York that they might talk it over en route. On the way to the metropolis Mr. Geier unfolded the details of his plan.[12]

The plan was for manufacturers and business men, along with their employees, in industries requiring protective tariff legislation to organize nationwide to promote the reelection efforts of Taft. It would become known as the National Prosperity League. The idea of the Prosperity League appears to have been Fred Geier's, even though a *Cincinnati Enquirer* article reported the Prosperity League was formed "at the personal request of President Taft."[13] Fred Geier would become the Prosperity League's national chairman.

In 1912 Taft and the Republican Party were in serious trouble. At no time between the Civil War and the New Deal did its prospects appear so dismal. The GOP had split in two with former President Theodore Roosevelt taking many of the more progressive Republicans along with him when he announced his Bull Moose candidacy for president. Cincinnati and the Ohio GOP were not spared the distress of intra-party warfare. Republican Representative Nicholas Longworth, later Speaker of the House of Representatives, epitomized the distress. He was running for reelection and needed the support of the Ohio Republican Party. He was more conservative than Roosevelt, but the ex-President was his father-in-law. In the end he remained loyal to the GOP regulars and went down to election night defeat.

The National Prosperity League began with the Cincinnati Prosperity League, which was organized on 30 September 1912 during a meeting at the Ohio Mechanics Institute. Over 200 Queen City businessmen gathered to hear speakers laud Taft on the tariff question and

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[11] "Veto Saves Tool Trade," *Cincinnati Times-Star*, 17 August 1912, p. 7.

[12] Gus J. Karger, "Employers and Workmen to Unite in Country-Wide Movement for Taft and the Preservation of Prosperity," *Cincinnati Times-Star*, 25 September 1912, p. 1.

[13] "Cincinnati Business Men Rally To Taft's Support," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 1 October 1912, p. 5.

Photograph of President William Howard Taft, presented to Fred A. Geier on election day in 1912. It is inscribed: 'For my good friend, Frederick A. Geier, with warmest gratitude and best wishes. Wm. H. Taft.' It hangs outside the offices of the chairman and the president of Cincinnati Milacron.

to take digs at Roosevelt. Geier addressed the gathering at length and addressed the tariff question. He also stated that under no circumstances could the Bull Moose presidential candidate be elected.

A committee of 15 men was appointed to secure the permanency of the league through united organizational action. The 15 named were: Fred A. Geier, Sam L. Moyer, C. M. Atkins, Julius Fleischmann, Albert Bettinger, J. Walter Freiberg, George F. Dieterle, Joseph A. Green, A. Clifford Shinkle, J. G. Schmidlapp, William Gilbert, Louis J. Hauck, George R. Balch, Ernest Griess and Lewis Seasongood.[14]

The National and Cincinnati Prosperity Leagues established their headquarters in the Mercantile Library Building and began to an educational campaign to enlist businessmen and workers on behalf of a "sane protective tariff" and President Taft. Geier hoped that his organization would be able to duplicate the efforts of the "sound money" forces in the 1896 contest between William McKinley and William Jennings Bryan.

It would be interesting to know whether Geier really believed that his labors on behalf of President Taft would have any real impact. Analysts and polls all pointed to a resounding Taft defeat. One observer remarked that the only two sta in Taft's constellation were Charles P. Taft's *Times-Star* and Warren Harding's *Marion Star.*

Publicly, Geier was optimistic. In a letter to machine tool builders he exhorted:

> Organize your communities! Talk with your employees! Write letters to your business associates all over the country! Discuss the matter with your friends in the professions.
>
> This is an economic question in which every man is vitally interested.
>
> Already the tide is turning toward President Taft. The victory is certain, if you and your friends do your duty.

There were inquiries about the Prosperity League from manufacturers in Rockford, Illinois; Madison, Wisconsin; and Cleveland, Ohio, even before the Cincinnati Prosperity League was organized. But even at the time, it appeared to be wishful thinking that financial and manufacturing circles would work for and contribute major funds to Taft, who was viewed as an almost certain loser. To many, Woodrow Wilson represented a more palatable choice than Roosevelt, who sometimes appeared to be a vindictive and arrogant loose cannon.

Still, during October the *Enquirer* and *Times-Star* reported plans by the Prosperity League to mail out 100,000 letters on behalf of Taft and his tariff stand. The League did produce pamphlets as well as daily fact sheets for friendly newspapers. On 23 October 1912, the *Times-Star* reported that N. H. Fairbanks, identified as a prominent manufacturer in Springfield, Ohio, had requested 10,000 pamphlets titled "Think Before You Vote" from the League.

While the Prosperity League undoubtedly may have hoped to make a national difference, it appears that its greatest impact was in the Queen City and Hamilton County. And this was the arena where the battle raged between the regular Republicans, represented by Taft and Geier, and the opposition Democrats. Geier unquestionably spoke to his workers on Taft's behalf in 1912. It was a common practice at the time for employers to tell their employees how to vote. And the texts of his talks preceding subsequent presidential elections still exist in Cincinnati Milacron's archives.

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[14] Ibid.

The opposition countered with Democratic Congressman Allen from Ohio's Second District charging that Mr. Geier had no genuine interest in the welfare of the working man "until 30 days before the election." Geier's charge that the tariff helped to protect the workingmen's wages resulted in opposition advertisements in the *Enquirer* contending that Geier's efforts were only strengthening the old "Cox Gang." The broadsides were placed by the Hamilton County Democratic Party.[15]

While the Democrats faulted Geier's efforts in the months before the election, President Taft was literally on vacation in Beverly, Massachusetts, much of the time from late August to mid-October. Unfortunately, this presidential sojourn reinforced a popular impression that Taft lacked the energy to be a strong leader and president.

The final weeks of the campaign brought about heightened GOP activity. The *Times-Star* on 25 October 1912 ran photographs of Geier, Sen. Theodore E. Burton (R.-Ohio) and others planning campaign activities at the Prosperity League headquarters. And it was the league that was responsible for President Taft's closing campaign rally in Cincinnati.

Campaign coverage in the *Times-Star*, published by the President's brother, was unquestionably slanted in the incumbent's favor. Its reporting was peppered with positive sentences such as the following, "No political meeting held in Music Hall since 1896 approached the size or enthusiasm that was held Saturday evening." Four thousand supporters of Taft were said to have paraded to Music Hall carrying torches and transparencies. The newspaper claimed it was the biggest political parade in the Queen City in many years. Former Ohio Senator Joseph B. Foraker addressed those assembled inside.

As Chairman of the Prosperity League, Fred Geier had the last word. In closing the rally he urged, "It is up to voters. This meeting shows there is a militant Republican Party in Hamilton County. Let it be heard from on election day."[16]

Much of the thrust of Taft's campaign and Geier's effort was captured in a letter the President sent to Geier. It was made public by the White House on 29 October 1912. Both the *Enquirer* and the *Times-Star* carried the entire text. The *Times-Star* placed the letter from the President at the top of the front page under two banner headlines.[17]

Taft wrote to Geier that, "No man would care to have his state fail him, but wholly apart from selfish interest, I want to see Ohio go Republican by a large majority." The President further went on to enumerate various Ohio interests (wool, pottery, machine tools, steam engines) that would be menaced by the victory of Woodrow Wilson and a Democratic Congress.

The President closed on an optimistic note:

> Under such circumstances I am sure you can appreciate, my dear Mr. Geier, how pleased I am to learn of the splendid work you are doing. You probably saw the Republican estimate of the vote in New York. You may accept it as trustworthy. The great, reserve force of plain, practical sense of the

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[15] "Forward or Back—It's Up To You!" *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 3 November 1912, p. 25.

[16] "Speakers Inspired by Great Meeting," *Cincinnati Times-Star*, 28 October 1912, p. 11.

[17] "Ohio Would Suffer More Than Any Other State, If Democrats Won, Says President Taft," *Cincinnati Times-Star*, 29 October 1912, p. 1.

American people is asserting itself, and that means victory for the Republican ticket on November 5.

Sincerely yours,

Wm. H. Taft[18]

The President returned to his hometown on election eve in order to cast his ballot. The Prosperity League hosted a reception for the Chief Executive. A committee from the league journeyed to Dayton to meet and to accompany Taft on the last leg of his trip. The *Enquirer* reported that, "The committee which went to Dayton consisted of the following: Fred A. Geier, Chairman; General Lewis Seasongood, George Dieterle, A. Clifford Shinkle, C. Wood Walter, George Puchta, R. E. Morrison and George R. Scrugham."[19]

Historians note that not even the President was sanguine about his chances and presumably Geier was also realistic enough to know the defeat election night would bring. But it is unlikely that either the President or the Prosperity League Chairman could have foreseen the magnitude of the defeat, the worst suffered by any president to that time. In the words of Taft's biographer, Henry F. Pringle, the Chief Executive received only the "eight pathetic votes of Vermont and Utah."[20] The popular tally was also disheartening. Of the approximately 15 million ballots cast, 11 million were cast for liberal candidates: Democrat Wilson, Bull Moose Theodore Roosevelt and Socialist Eugene Debs.

Taft survived his defeat and within a short time was seen happily occupied on the golf links. And in spite of "working night and day" in Taft's behalf, Fred Geier could look back at this time with a smile. His brother-in-law, C. Wood Walter, wrote:

> With what deep satisfaction may we always recall the proud fact that through our strenuous efforts in the Presidential Campaign of 1912—the National Prosperity League carried the States of Vermont and Utah for Taft—we hadn't time to reach the remaining states.[21]

TARIFFS

It was the Underwood Tariff that was the cause of Fred Geier's active involvement in the 1912 presidential election. It is instructive to review some of the background and issues central to this early twentieth-century legislation.

Until 1909, machine tools were included in the general classification of "metal working machinery" on tariff rate schedules. In November 1909, representatives of machine tool builders appeared before the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives to testify on the proposed Payne tariff. The machine tool builders advocated that the then 45 percent maximum tariff on machine tool imports be maintained; however, they urged that a

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[18] Ibid.

[19] "Taft is Home to Cast Ballot; Relies on Great Silent Vote to Give Victory to G.O.P.," *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 5 November 1912, pp. 1-2.

[20] Henry F. Pringle, *The Life and Times of William Howard Taft*, Vol. II, p. 840.

[21] C. Wood Walter, Letter to Fred A. Geier for his birthday in 1916, Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

minimum tariff of 30 percent be introduced for those countries that favored the United States in their tariff schedules.

The reasoning of the American machine tool builders becomes apparent when one considers that exports constituted an average of 30 percent of total production. Some foreign governments were contemplating increasing tariffs against machine tool imports unless American tariff schedules were pared back. France, an export market third only to Germany and England, was proposing to raise its tariff barriers unless the United States lowered its schedules.

The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company took an active part in the industry's effort to lower the Payne Tariff's rates. A letter to the ways and means committee Chairman, Sereno Payne, urging a lower tariff was signed by ten machine tool executives throughout the Northeast and Middle West. The first signatory, and most likely the letter's drafter, was C. Wood Walter, the Mill's secretary and treasurer.

The Payne bill brought about another change that would have adverse consequences for American machine tool builders. For the first time, machine tools were given a distinct classification. They were grouped with cash registers, jute manufacturing machinery, linotype and all typesetting machines, printing presses, sewing machines, typewriters and all steam engines. All were given a 30 percent ad valorem tariff schedule.

In 1912 the Underwood bill took all of the above, excluding only jute manufacturing machinery and steam engines, and placed them on a free or no tariff list. Machine tool builders contended that they were victims of an "accidental placing." It may have been an accidental placing, or it may have been a deliberate attempt to embarrass President Taft by hitting at an industry centered in his hometown.

There had been changes in the three years since the Payne Tariff had been enacted. The most important change was that the German machine tool builders were rapidly capturing markets within Germany and in other countries from American builders. American machine tool builders feared that in the absence of a 30 percent tariff the home market was also threatened by the efficient Germans. That trend was apparent, they argued, when statistics showed European machine tool exports to the United States rose from $177,002 in 1910 to $191,082 in 1911. Imports would have been greater had not American industry been operating in below normal conditions, they contended.

The machine tool builders mobilized to urge passage of an amendment to keep a 30 percent tariff on machine tool imports. The National Machine Tool Builders Association (NMTBA) retained James H. Herron to help their efforts before Congress. In a letter to the NMTBA membership Herron wrote:

> It is absolutely essential that we make our case so strong now, that we get this Amendment through before the Bill is presented to the President, so that whether he vetoes it or not, we will have established a precedent against putting Machine Tools on the free list, which will be effective in any Tariff measure, whether it be enacted by Democrats or Republicans.[22]

The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's executive offices became a virtual research center as Fred A. Geier and C. Wood Walter actively solicited information on all sorts of questions likely to be asked in hearings relative to machine tools and tariffs. Information was requested not only from American builders but from foreign distributors and United States governmental agencies and boards.

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[22] Letter to membership of the N.M.T.B.A., 3 February 1912, J. H. Herron, Oakley, Ohio.

A key argument that the machine tool builders sought to establish was that only seven types of metal products, out of thousands, were placed on the free list in the pending legislation. And six of those seven, e.g., cash registers, might fairly be defined as monopolistic. On the other hand, the NMTBA argued that the 200 companies building machine tools guaranteed competition.

Fred Geier, as NMTBA president, was designated as the association spokesman to testify before the Senate Finance Committee on the industry's concerns with the pending legislation. Geier's testimony on 9 February was certainly informed. Given the fact that much of the material was quickly assembled in the preceding week, it was most impressive.

Ohio Senator Theodore E. Burton wrote to Geier afterward that "one of the Democrats on the Finance Committee this morning told me that your presentation of the case of the machine tool industry was the best statement that has been made to the Committee during the present hearings."[23]

Fred Geier was appreciative of Senator Burton's kind words but, nevertheless, remained skeptical of the impact of his testimony. In his response to the senator he noted that, "Unfortunately, there was only one Democratic member present on the second day of the hearing, on which day we presented the best part of the argument."[24] As several Democrats failed to attend the hearings, Fred Geier later attempted to persuade them in person. Prominent professionals and businessmen from Cincinnati and Indianapolis wrote Senator John W. Kern (D.-Indiana) seeking an appointment for Fred Geier to explain the machine tool builders' position. Senator Kern, a member of the Senate Finance Committee, would later become the first senate majority leader.

In the end, the amendment the machine tool builders sought failed and, in turn, President Taft would veto the Underwood Tariff of 1912. The broader political and philosophical ramifications of Underwood's legislation took precedence over the merits of an amendment. In addition, foreign manufacturers were just beginning to enter the American market and many legislators undoubtedly felt that imports did not constitute a threat to an industry that has historically been poorly understood.

As tariff questions have been a constant part of America's political and economic life, some of the arguments from the early twentieth century have a tone familiar to those living on the eve of the twenty-first century. Consider James H. Herron's words to machine tool builders addressing lower labor and manufacturing costs outside the United States:

> It must be also noted, that while this Bill removes the American Tariff on Machine Tools, it gives us no relief in lowering the tariffs against us in any foreign country. German machine tools would come in FREE, while we would have tariffs against us in Germany; Canadian machine tools would come in FREE, while we would have a tariff of 27 percent ad valorem against us. This ultimately would force the transfer of our plants to Canada and Germany.[25]

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[23] Senator Theodore E. Burton to Fred A. Geier, 12 February 1912. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[24] Fred A. Geier to Senator Theodore E. Burton, 19 February 1912. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[25] James H. Herron, letter to all members of the National Machine Tool Builders Association and others, 3 February 1912. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

THE 1916 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN AND AFTERWARD

After the defeat of President Taft in 1912 and of Mayor Hunt in 1913, Fred Geier no longer had an intimate access to the leaders of his nation and his city. These defeats, as well as the third-place finish of the City Party in 1907, would have caused lesser persons to abandon attempts at political advocacy.

That would not be the case with Geier who would again, in 1916, be advising his employees on the merits of the Republican Party. On 6 November 1916, the day before the presidential election, Fred Geier spoke at length to his assembled Mill workers. He began his carefully prepared six-page talk saying, "I am not going to ask you to vote one way or another. This is a free country, and when it is a question of the ballot box, everyone certainly ought to have the right to express his opinion."

He then took the opportunity to speak at length about his political preference in the presidential election and his reasons. The presidential election in 1916 differed from the 1912 campaign in several important aspects. As is normal in American campaigns, it was basically a two-man race, Democrat Woodrow Wilson versus Republican challenger Charles Evans Hughes. World War I, which had begun in August, 1914, injected issues of war, peace and preparedness into the campaign. The country was at work and prosperous. The key questions were how artificial the prosperity was and how long would it last.

Geier, in his talks to employees, stressed that the prosperity of 1916 rested upon a very abnormal situation, a world war. He noted that, "When there are thrown into this country several billions of dollars of gold and securities, it makes everything go...."

Geier went on to remind his employees of conditions in early 1914 when machine tool production and demand dropped precipitously as part of a general depression in the metalworking industries. His review painted a gloomy scene:

> We know what happened in 1914. In 1914 this country had 18,280 failures—the worst record in our history. Then clearings fell off $20,000,000,000 (twenty billion dollars)—over 11 percent, our production decreased 25 percent. Forty percent of American woolen mills were idle, the importation of cotton cloth increased 80 percent, importation from England of woolen goods increased from two million yards in 1913 to over eight million yards in 1914, and England shipped 33 million yards worsted goods as compared with nine million yards in previous years.

When the European War broke out in August 1914, the machine tool industry anticipated an even deeper depression. At that time, Geier recalled, the Mill had cut back production to three days a week and had run out of space to store machines. However, war-related orders would lift the U.S. economy out of its slump and exports would climb from $747,000,000 in 1914 to $2,900,000,000 in the fall of 1916.

In his talks to employees, Geier always stressed business and political fundamentals. The big difference between the two major parties, as he saw it, was their view of tariffs. The Democratic position was that tariff duties were unconstitutional except for the purpose of raising revenues. But as Geier emphasized in his talk, "The Republican Party all the time and today says, that where there is a difference in the cost of production, it is proper and right that we should build a wall high enough to keep goods from other countries flooding over that wall into this country."

He went further when he predicted that at the war's end the nations fighting would be so mired in debt that they would have to export their manufactures to regain solvency. And the exporters would look first to the greatest market in the world—the United States.

With the American market protected, American tool makers gained the benefit of economies of scale and produced goods less expensively. This permitted Americans to compete in overseas markets.

Fred Geier's talks to employees on election day may have been spurred both by the importance and the closeness of the election. The election, indeed, proved to be a close call. Republican candidate Charles Evans Hughes went to bed on election night thinking that he had been elected president. But when California fell into President Wilson's electoral column, it was certain that Hughes had been defeated. Final electoral tallies show 277 votes for Wilson compared to 254 votes for Hughes. A change in Ohio's 24 electoral votes, which went to President Wilson, would have changed the outcome.

The next four presidential elections were not cliff-hangers. With the "Return to Normalcy" at the end of the Great War, the GOP easily regained and held the White House for 12 years. Afterward in 1932, economic events made Franklin D. Roosevelt's triumph over President Herbert Hoover predictable. It is known that The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's Chief remained a defender of Republican causes and candidates as he continued his practice of assembling his employees and telling them how he felt about the issues and the candidates. But the speeches he gave were either off-the-cuff or, if typed, removed from his files at the Mill in the decades that followed.

CHAPTER VII

THE OAKLEY FACTORY COLONY

The sale of Fred Holz's interest to Fred Geier resulted in Geier assuming the presidency of the Mill, even though he had effective control since at least 1895. Holz and Geier had apparently worked comfortably together, but the visions of the two were different. Geier, after seeing earlier merger and trust proposals remain unaccomplished and seeing the Spring Grove Avenue plant reach the limit of its capacity (there were six additions to the Spring Grove Avenue plant) was ready for a new and more ambitious expansion.

The usual course of action for a manufacturer needing to expand would be to purchase enough land to build a facility for immediate and projected future requirements. An alternative course would be to lease or adapt an existing plant for machine tool production. The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was seeking to control the supply of iron castings needed for its manufacturing and the availability of a manufacturing site with a cast iron foundry would be limited, if indeed one did exist.

Power House

In 1906 Fred Geier decided to build a foundry along with a power plant to furnish electric power, heat, light and compressed air. The power plant and foundry would then supply a new manufacturing plant with energy and raw materials. While such a building program may have been considered bold, it was conventional. What was not conventional was Fred Geier's decision to organize a pioneer industrial park in a sleepy little village of approximately 450 inhabitants. Oakley was located seven miles from downtown Cincinnati and its previous fame had been as a center for wholesome family recreation—picnics, boating and lawn games. It was also the site of the leading race track in Ohio, and some of the activities associated with the racing crowd were neither wholesome nor legal.

On 16 July 1906, Fred A. Geier; Nathaniel Henchman Davis, President of the Central Trust and Safe Deposit Company; Glen Brown, realtor; Lewis N. Gatch, attorney; and Harry Levy, liquor distiller and wholesale dealer, met to incorporate and subscribe to stock in the Factory Colony Company.

The Factory Colony Company enumerates 32 lines of purposes in its articles of incorporation. But the primary business was "...erecting factories, houses and other buildings thereon and making other improvements, highways, parks and commons..." The Factory Colony Company had an authorized capitalization of $100,000: 1,000 shares with a par value of $100. Only 505 shares were originally subscribed and Fred Geier acquired a majority interest with his 300-share purchase.

The core of what is Cincinnati Milacron's Oakley manufacturing complex was, in 1906, two farms purchased for $111,623.60. The farms lay north of the Baltimore and Ohio Southwestern Railroad Company and west of Columbia, which was later renamed Marburg Avenue. The smaller of the farms was purchased from the heirs of William Melcher. The deceased Melcher was a gardener and the family later had greenhouses on Ridge Road. Some old timers relate that there was a plum orchard on one of the farms and it seems likely that it would have been on the Melcher farm.

The larger of the two properties (63.853 acres) was sold by Edward Lee and Lulu Johnson McClain of Greenfield in Highland County, Ohio. The sale price was $76,623.60. McClain was one of the first families and a leading philanthropist in Highland County. He made a fortune by improving the design of and mass producing, for the first time, padded horse collars, which were sold throughout the world. In 1903 he became president of the American Pad and Textile Company.

Additional land was purchased adjacent to the factory colony acreage although it is not clear that the factory colony was the purchaser. Philip O. Geier, the oldest of Fred's three younger brothers, started working at the Mill in the purchasing department on 14 November 1904. According to a feature in The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company house organ, *The Milling Review*, Philip O. Geier was active in the negotiations and planning that led to real estate purchases in Oakley. *The Milling Review* reported, "Building lots surrounding this district [The Factory Colony] were acquired before the announcement of the move to Oakley was made. This gave employees the opportunity to purchase their lots at cost, should they desire to move to this suburb and thus avoid the increase in price that followed the moving of industry to Oakley."[1]

The purchase price for the two farms, more than $100,000 for about 100 acres, might appear to have been high. Apparently it was not. One author writing in 1915 about the industrial cities of Oakley and Norwood stated:

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[1] "Presenting Our Chairman of the Board," *The Milling Review* 1, no. 4 (1936): 65.

> The land owned by the factories, both that already occupied and that held vacant for future needs, is now worth more than $4,000 an acre, according to estimates based on the Norwood appraisement of 1910 and the opinions of real-estate men. One of the most favorably located of these factory sites cost, says the president of the concern owning it, $1,000 an acre in 1900.[2]

The proposed move to Oakley was so audacious that even some members of the Geier family expressed reservations. George A. Mayer, The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company vice president (1895-1905), was so doubtful about the wisdom of the move that he resigned his company offices for "health reasons." He would live until 1955. George Mayer's first wife, Matilda, who died during childbirth in 1893, was one of Fred Geier's sisters. August Tuechter, President of Cincinnati Bickford Machine Tool Company, was certain Fred had "taken leave of his senses." Nevertheless, Tuechter would follow the persuasive Fred Geier and establish his plant next to The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company in the Oakley factory colony.

Fred Geier's plans for a new machine shop, foundry and power plant were considered far too risky by one of the leading Cincinnati bankers, William Stanhope Rowe, cashier of the First National Bank. He reportedly told Fred and Philip Geier that they were becoming over-extended. He would turn down the Geiers' loan request for "their own good."

If Cincinnati's bankers were dubious and disapproving of the chances for the proposed factory colony, it may have been because of the scope of the planned enterprise and its cooperative nature. The bankers certainly were aware that industry had been relocating and moving out of the congested Cincinnati basin for some time. Procter & Gamble's Ivorydale operations and the Mill's own Spring Grove facility were early examples of this.

In 1898 the first big factory moved from Cincinnati to land bordering the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad in Norwood. It was the Bullock Electric Works of the Allis-Chalmers Company. By 1909, Norwood boasted 49 manufacturing operations that were capitalized at over $13 million. Among the more prominent concerns were the United States Playing Card Company, the Weir Frog Company and the Globe-Wernicke Company, which moved from the inner-city in 1900 to 20 suburban acres that had previously been a corn field.

Fred A. Geier's move, which would be the first further east on the Baltimore & Ohio line in Oakley, did not get underway until 1906. His rationale for the move, to escape the handicaps of congestion and to secure room to establish an efficient modern plant where land was cheap, was understood by all industrialists.

Company records do not disclose precisely how the buying and building in Oakley were financed. A portion of the financing was through the issuing and sale of 1,000 additional shares of preferred stock ($100 par value) "at no less than par." This brought the total authorized issues of preferred stock to 3,500 shares. Geier family oral history holds that a Philadelphia bank did make a short-term (90-day) loan and it is probable that the Central Trust and Safe Deposit Company assisted or even participated in the loan. Nathaniel H. Davis, Central Trust's President, joined The Cincinnati Milling Machine Board in 1906 and Fred Geier became a director of Central Trust in 1907.

Fred Geier's negotiations with the Central Trust Company and the German National Bank to arrange for the sale of preferred stock resulted in the Mill's board's approval of certain conditions or points. Three of the points are particularly important:

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[2] Graham Romeyn Taylor, *Satellite Cities: A Study of Industrial Suburbs* (New York and London, Appleton and Company, 1915), 108.

That The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company agrees to have an audit made and inventory taken at some convenient time each year and to furnish copy of same to the Trust Company.

That it will continue to charge out and maintain broken reserves against machinery, buildings and other property accounts.

That the Preferred Stock will be listed on the Cincinnati Stock Exchange.

Arrangements to finance the move to Oakley resulted in noteworthy changes in the company history. An outside auditor and public accountant, Guy W. Kennedy of Cincinnati, now furnished financial figures on an annual basis and the preferred stock listing with the Cincinnati Stock Exchange preceded the Mill's common stock listing on the New York Stock Exchange by 40 years.

The Oakley factory colony is significant as a pioneering effort in industrial park development. The Urban Land Institute reports that such developments are essentially a post-World War II phenomenon. While commonplace today, there were only 33 industrial parks and districts in existence in 1939. Planned industrial districts in America started in Chicago shortly after the turn of the century. Chicago's Central Manufacturing District, founded in 1902, is credited with being the first. The Oakley factory colony has not received attention as a pioneering effort, although a persuasive case may be made that it is one of the earliest industrial parks in the nation.

Graham Taylor, in his 1915 study of industrial suburbs, lauded Fred Geier's bold undertaking in Oakley. He wrote, "As an example of foresight and efficiency in planning for manufacturing the 'factory colony' at Oakley is notable."[3] The Oakley factory colony would have some glitches but, overall, there was a consensus that it was a brilliantly conceived and executed cooperative concept.

"ONE OF THE MOST REMARKABLE FACTORY BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRY"

—*Machinery* March 1912

Engineering plans and cost estimates for the Modern Foundry Company, a separate organization owned by the stockholders of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, and of Factory Power were adopted by the Board of Directors of the Mill on 20 December 1906. The estimate for the foundry buildings and power plant, with equipment, totalled $184,414.

Fred Geier, at the director's meeting, spoke of a "possible new machine shop building to be erected at the Oakley site." The Spring Grove plant had reached the limit of manufacturing capacity and apparently other problems existed. This interpretation is suggested by the following remark made at the 2 April 1906 board meeting:

> Owing to the fact that the Company is very considerably behind on deliveries and because of the loss incident to closing the shop for ten days, it was decided to omit the annual inventory taking on July 1, 1906.

The Modern Foundry Company was built during 1907 and the foundry had a daily melting capacity of 30 tons of gray iron for machine tool castings. All machine tool castings, including the largest milling machine column castings, could be made on the molding

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[3] Ibid., 104.

machines. The modern foundry was located at the north end of where the machine shop was constructed, at the corner of Columbia [now Marburg Avenue] and North [now Disney].

The second facility constructed was the power plant, known as Factory Power. It was owned jointly by the companies it served. The original four firms were: The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, the Cincinnati Bickford Tool Company, the Cincinnati Planer Company and the Triumph Electric Company. By mid-1912, plants were built or contracted by Cincinnati Lathe and Tool, the Alvey Ferguson Company and the Cincinnati Balcrank Company. There were nine factory developments, including the foundry and power plant, in the Oakley factory colony.

The power plant was centrally located and furnished the colony with power, light, heat, compressed air, water and fire protection. In 1912 its boilers had a capacity of 1,800 horsepower. That capacity was more than four times usage in the pre-World War I period. The Factory Power Company was operated at cost and provided economies over what the various factories had previously experienced. One of the plants received power in this period at one and one-half cents per kilowatt hour, half the cost of its previous Cincinnati site.

Near the power house was an artificial reservoir with a capacity of 250,000 gallons. A water tower with two tanks (75,000 and 50,000 gallon capacity) furnished a gravity water supply for the fire sprinkler system and service water for drinking and sanitation purposes. All of the Oakley buildings had sprinkler systems that met fire insurance requirements.

The uniform conditions required by the factory colony went beyond provisions for a sprinkler system to specifications for the construction of all the factory buildings in the Oakley colony. As a consequence, insurance costs were reduced to approximately one-tenth of what had been paid for premiums on the old plants in Cincinnati.

The first section of the machine shop was erected in 1909-1910. It was a single-story red brick and steel building with a saw-tooth roof. Adolph De Leeuw, a leading machine tool consultant and soon to become the chief engineer at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, advised Fred Geier on matters of plant construction and layout.

De Leeuw came to the Mill as a consultant from Hamilton, an industrial town north of Cincinnati on the Great Miami River. He had been the chief engineer at the Niles Tool Works, a leading manufacturer of large machine tools. He advised the Mill's officers on the design of the foundry as well as that of the factory and the office building. Although De Leeuw was a highly regarded consultant (he took the position of chief engineer of the Singer Manufacturing Company when he left Cincinnati at the time of World War I) he was not always on target with his projections. Walter Geier, the youngest of the four Geier brothers, was chosen to run the foundry. Walter Geier wrote:

> According to the prospectus (prepared by De Leeuw) the profits were to be 50 percent on capital invested, based on a production of 20 tons of castings per day, while actual experience demonstrated we have to produce 40 tons of castings per day to absorb the overhead with a good profit remaining.[4]

Perhaps the modifications required in the foundry operation resulted in Fred Geier's search for additional outside input when the plans for the machine shop were being developed. Fred and Philip Geier asked both Adolph De Leeuw and the Cincinnati architectural firm of Rapp, Zettel and Rapp to submit their drawings and blueprints to Detroit architect Albert

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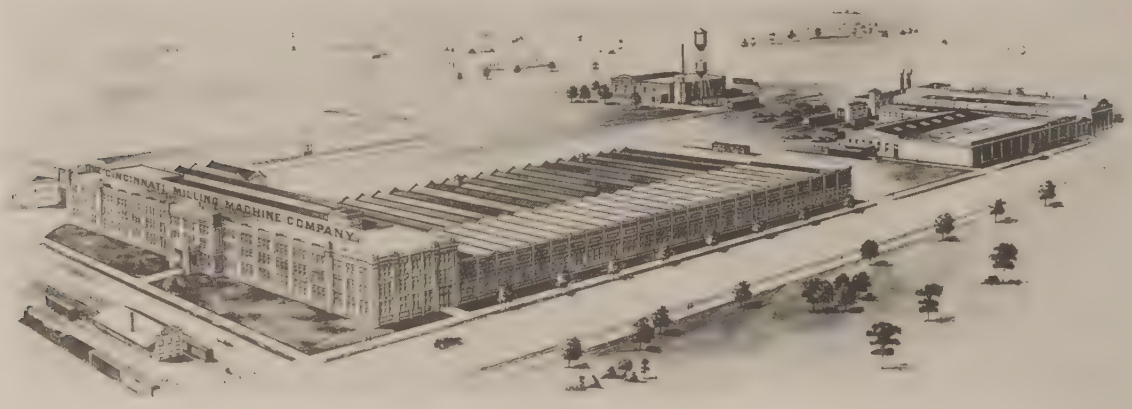
[4] Walter H. Geier, A testimonial letter written on the occasion of the fiftieth birthday of Fred A. Geier (1916). Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

Kahn for "suggestions and criticism." Kahn, a German-born architect, had founded his own architectural firm in 1904.

It turned out that Kahn, who did become the consulting architect, typified Fred Geier's knack for obtaining the best talent available. Over the years Kahn's firm designed the Willow Run plant and another 1,000 factories for the Ford Motor Company as well as 127 plants for General Motors. At the time of his death in 1942 Kahn was recognized, according to an entry in the *Encyclopedia Americana*, "as the originator of modern factory design."

Castings and other raw material were received at the north end of the machine shop, which was opposite the modern foundry. The work progressed along a parallel line with storage of raw materials and machining operations occurring at the north end and the assembling of machines being the next process. At the southern (or shipping) end of the plant were the painting, final inspection, packing and shipping departments. Railroad cars arrived at the shipping platform on a depressed track. The floors of the cars were level with the platform and these cars could be loaded at once.

The final phase of the building program was the three-story building at the south end of the machine shop. It was completed in 1911 and in that year all operations and functions moved from the Spring Grove plant. That plant was sold in 1912 to the Miller Shoe Manufacturing Company for $70,000.



OUR NEW PLANT
THE CINCINNATI MILLING MACHINE COMPANY
CINCINNATI, OHIO
275,000 square feet of floor space (exclusive of Power Plant). The largest plant in the world devoted exclusively to the manufacture of milling machines and milling cutter grinders
Machine shop 585 ft. long - South Front 380 ft. 3 Stories

The first floor of the three-story structure was a continuation of the shop. The second floor was devoted to stockrooms for finished parts and to the assembling of cutter grinders and milling machine attachments. The third floor was selected for general offices and the engineering and clerical departments. The reason for the selection was that the third floor was quieter, cleaner and better ventilated. It also contained a 600-seat auditorium, kitchen and dining room.

As at the Spring Grove plant, management took special care in providing sanitary and comfortable working conditions. Individual lockers were provided for all men and marble showers were constructed. Each shower compartment was divided into two sections, which consisted of bath and dressing room.

Machinery magazine, in citing the plant as one of the most remarkable buildings in the country, noted:

> It is apparent to the observer that a great deal of thought has been expended to secure, as nearly as possible, ideal shop conditions with regard to mechanical arrangement, light, heat, ventilation and sanitation. It is no exaggeration to call their works a model plant, constructed and equipped for the highest efficiency.[5]

Management took great pride in its new facilities. Company sales catalogs generally contained pages of descriptions, photos and sketches of the Mill. Buyers were invited to visit the "Works." It was an impressive selling point. The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, with six and one-third acres of floor space, was billed as the "largest plant in the world devoted exclusively to the manufacture of milling machines and milling cutter grinders."

Rail fare from downtown Cincinnati to the Mill was five cents. The rail-line and the Oakley station located adjacent to the factory colony are evidence of an improvement over the transportation facilities in the early 1890s at the Spring Grove plant. Plant Superintendent Ernest Chace described that earlier time, "The transportation facilities were very meager, almost everybody walked. There was, however, for rainy days the checkerboard mule driven streetcars, each mule with a bell hung to its neck to warn people of the approach of this rapid moving vehicle."

Public transportation to Oakley, both trains and streetcars, predated the beginning of the Factory Colony. Indeed, it helped make Fred A. Geier's dream of a pioneering industrial park a reality. The Geier brothers worked to make employee transportation and freight shipments even more convenient. This was especially true for Philip O. Geier who negotiated for the extension of B&O Railroad tracks and switch yards into the Oakley Factory Colony. For several years in the World War I era there was even a commuter train, known as the "Factory Special," that brought workers from the Cincinnati basin out to the industrial plants of Norwood and Oakley. That train was discontinued sometime in the 1920s as both streetcars and automobiles had by then increased ridership at the railroad's expense.

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[5] "The New Plant of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Co.," *Machinery* 18 (March 1912): 537.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CLIMB TO THE TOP

It is one thing to manufacture the best milling machine in the world. It is another to successfully market your product, especially in territories where other builders had an acknowledged dominance. Mr. Henry Prentiss, a pioneer in the sales and distribution of machine tools and president of the H. Prentiss Tool & Supply Company, related an early experience with Fred Geier occurring about 1887, when the Mill was still the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company. Prentiss had recently sold a Cincinnati universal milling machine to a manufacturer of paper cutters in Brooklyn. The machine was standing outside Prentiss' Manhattan showroom awaiting delivery.

The milling machine was noticed by a New England machine tool builder, E. P. Bullard, Sr., who sought out Mr. Prentiss to offer some friendly advice. "My friend, said he, don't you know that you can't sell a universal miller made in Cincinnati in the east?"[1] Mr. Bullard would, in a short span of time, be proven wrong. In time the Cincinnati milling machine would overtake even the most famous Yankee machine tool builder, Brown & Sharpe Manufacturing Company of Providence, Rhode Island.

Mr. Bullard's prejudice had some basis in fact. In the years after the Civil War there was a great demand for big machine tools, in part driven by the expansion of American railroads. It was said that Cincinnati's earliest machine tool builders were able to compete successfully with Philadelphia and New England firms based on price and availability. Sometimes this led to machine tools being hastily "made" in Western shops instead of methodically "manufactured" as they were in the East.

For example, a Cincinnati machine tool maker might respond to an order for a large new planer by simply scaling up a smaller one the shop was already producing and then custom making all the parts in a unsystematic way. The new machine tool was in fact a prototype that was sold immediately to create income.

In the Eastern centers at that time the established firms operated differently:

> First, an engineer skilled in machine design would be employed to design the new machine specifically to meet the new requirements. Next, a prototype would be made, and tested for months. Then the prototype would be torn down and carefully examined, and the design modified accordingly. Finally, a large investment would be made in labor-saving machinery especially designed to speed production and insure the uniformity and precision of the new machine tool. The common Western method of competing with the efficiency and ingenuity of their Eastern competitors was to leave something off, and reduce everything else to the minimum. The result was that the lathes, planers and milling machines made in Cincinnati were not always up to Eastern standards, and were sometimes derisively referred to as "Western" or "agricultural."[2]

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[1] Henry Prentiss, "Reminiscences by Henry Prentiss" (Cincinnati, OH, Letters to Fred A. Geier for his birthday in 1916). Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[2] Rick Stager, "History of the Niles-Bement-Pond Tool Company: The story of the world's biggest machine tool business," 27 May 1993. Unpublished manuscript expected to be part of forthcoming

Fred Geier fostered a degree of cooperation among various Cincinnati tool builders at the end of the 1890s that would result in the name "Cincinnati" becoming a symbol of precision and quality. At times and places the name even became synonymous with machine tools. Those who earlier derided Cincinnati machine tool builders would, in time, become envious of the city's quality products.

Murray Shipley, a man closely identified with Cincinnati machine tool builders as vice president and secretary of the Lodge & Shipley Machine Tool Company, chronicled the date and circumstances of the remarkable success story in marketing "Cincinnati" machine tools:

> No doubt Fred will remember a dinner given at the old St. Nicholas Hotel (probably in 1897) for one Maloney, then representing Markt & Co., which dinner was what might be considered the beginning of definite cooperation between The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, the Bickford Machine Tool Company, the Cincinnati Machine Tool Company, the Cincinnati Shaper Company, the Cincinnati Planer Company and the Lodge & Shipley Machine Tool Company, dubbed by our competitors as "The Big Six." No more staunch supporter of this cooperation (the theory of all modern business) ever appeared in our midst than my friend, Fred.[3]

There are two factors, in addition to Fred Geier's beliefs and persuasive personality, that account for the high degree of cooperation established by several of the Cincinnati machine tool builders. The first factor is that Cincinnati machine tool builders specialized in their product lines. This allowed a group of builders to unite to a greater degree than machine tool builders elsewhere. The promotion of "Cincinnati machines" and "Cincinnati quality" was the outcome of this cooperation. Lodge & Shipley built lathes; Cincinnati Shaper, shapers; Cincinnati Planer, planers; The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, milling machines; Cincinnati Bickford and the Cincinnati Machine Tool Company, drilling machines.[4] Variations of a slogan used by the Mill could have been used by any one of the Big Six. The slogan: "We do one thing—We do that well."

The Big Six companies went to great lengths to work together and "to share the work." They even dared to explore some foreign markets together as suggested by the following:

> Recently W. E. Shipley brought to our attention the fact that Mr. Edwin S. Church, Superintendent of Machinery of the U.S. mint at Philadelphia, was interested in the establishment of a machine tool agency in China and it was suggested Mr. Church meet members of the Big Six when they are at the convention at Atlantic City. In order that we should have time to consider his proposition, we asked for a written statement from him....

In 1908 five of the Big Six (minus the Cincinnati Shaper Company) jointly displayed a machine tool exhibit at the M.C.B.A. and A.R.M.M.A. conventions at Atlantic City.

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monograph, p. 19.

[3] Murray Shipley, (Cincinnati, OH.: Letters to Fred A. Geier for his birthday in 1916). Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[4] Both The Cincinnati Machine Tool Company and The Cincinnati Bickford Companies manufactured drilling machines. However, the two companies were headed by August H. Tuechter, who was Fred A. Geier's first cousin, and Herman C. Schauer.

The cooperation of the Big Six in marketing efforts mirrored links found in other aspects of the six Cincinnati companies. Fred Geier was a director of the Cincinnati Bickford Tool Company and an incorporator of the Cincinnati Shaper Company. Geier's cousin, August Tuechter, was a Cincinnati Milling Machine Director from 1891 to 1905. It is probable that Fred Geier financially backed both Cincinnati Bickford and Cincinnati Planer at the time they built new factories in the Oakley factory colony.

SALES AT HOME AND ABROAD

Before creating a direct sales force in 1931, the Mill used agents and distributors to sell its products. Before that, in the Mill's infancy, it was Fred Geier who pounded the pavements for sales. It was just one of his jobs. Fortunately, it was one that he relished. Son Frederick V. Geier once wrote:

> My father was a man with a purpose. He knew how to make the most out of each day's work. Often he took the early milk train to towns several hours distant to be on hand as soon as a possible customer opened his shop in the morning. Before the day was over he was back in Cincinnati taking care of his office and factory matters.[5]

It was under Fred Geier's direct supervision that the Mill's selling organization was gradually developed and strengthened. It most likely started in 1893 with one salesman, Robert L. Crane. In free moments, and there were probably plenty of these during the Panic of 1893, Geier would take Crane to the basement of the Spring Grove Avenue plant, where the finished milling machines and cutter grinders were stored. There Geier would coach Crane on how to talk and sell machinery.

Crane recalled, "I was always impressed with his careful attention to details, his efficient methods and his thorough knowledge of the subject."[6] Fred Geier was impressed with Crane as he would become the first demonstrator the Mill sent out. This job entailed travelling with distributors from shop to shop to demonstrate the capabilities of milling machines and cutter grinders. It was a way of aiding the agents to obtain sales from prospective customers. The distributor brought along an expert, the demonstrator, to answer questions and to provide solutions to shop problems.

For nearly five years in the mid 1890s, Crane worked as a demonstrator for the Mill. It was a good thing that he was a bachelor at the time—or perhaps partially because of it he received this assignment—for the job did not leave any time for family life. Crane wrote, "...I traveled West to Denver, South to New Orleans and East to Portland, Maine, often leaving Cincinnati the second day of January to return the following Christmas morning. It was our yearly custom to always meet [Fred A. Geier] on that day in the morning and exchange the Greeting of the Year."[7]

At the time Fred Geier first became associated with the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company, the world of machinery agents was dog-eat-dog. An official for Prentiss Tool &

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[5] Frederick V. Geier, *Men of Purpose* (Cincinnati, Published by The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, 1964), 3.

[6] Robert L. Crane, (Cincinnati, OH.: Letters to Fred A. Geier for his birthday in 1916). Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[7] Ibid.

Supply Company noted that "...machinery agents in those days were more-or-less pirates as to the territory and places in which they disposed of their goods. Salesmen were given selling prices and instructed to dispose of stock, which was usually at hand, to any one they could, not taking into consideration where it was to be shipped."[8]

In the latter half of 1887 Henry Prentiss was back in Cincinnati on business. Although married to a Cincinnatian and a one-time pitcher for the Cincinnati Reds, he had returned to New York City in 1875 to found a business that primarily sold taps, dies and railroad supplies. Taps and dies were, naturally, products of the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company. Consequently, Henry Prentiss was well acquainted with Fred Holz and George and Oscar Mueller.

What Henry Prentiss was looking for was to sell a line of milling machines. And he wanted to be the exclusive agent within his territory in the East. Fred A. Geier, who was then the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company's secretary and treasurer, told Prentiss that the company would shortly be devoting its entire efforts to manufacturing milling machines and cutter grinders. Fred Geier went on to add that these machines would be "second to none in quality and efficiency." Fred Geier was looking for someone willing to sell Cincinnati milling machines in what was an inhospitable Eastern market.

A deal was struck between Geier and Prentiss, and both men and their organizations prospered by the decisions reached in 1887. Nearly three decades later, at the time of Fred Geier's 50th birthday in 1916, their oral understanding still held and had never been reduced to writing. In 1936 Henry Prentiss & Company was the oldest machine tool distributor in the country. At that time it represented the Mill in eight eastern states out of their offices in New York City; Buffalo, New York; Hartford, Connecticut; and Boston.

At one point in the 1890s Henry Prentiss established an office in Chicago, which he later sold to a company known as Marshall & Huschart. It was Fred Geier who introduced Cincinnatian Frank Huschart to Alfred Marshall. In 1902 the Marshall & Huschart Company floundered in difficulties that required a dissolution and reconstitution of the company. Alfred Marshall credited Fred Geier with being the one man capable of bringing the warring parties together.

Marshall & Huschart opened an office in Cleveland which was sold in 1904 to the Motch and Merryweather Company. As the two agencies divided the territories, a particularly spirited debate occurred over the sales boundary in Michigan. Each county was hotly contested. In case of a deadlock, Fred Geier was present to break the stalemate.

Eastern Michigan was the disputed area that Fred Geier awarded to Motch & Merryweather. No agency benefited more from Fred Geier's interventions than did the Motch & Merryweather Machinery Company of Cleveland. The two principal partners, Secretary Edwin R. Motch and President George E. Merryweather, were Cincinnati-area natives. Motch credited Geier with giving him his "first lesson in the art of selling" in 1898, when Motch was working out of the Cleveland office of Marshall & Huschart.

George Merryweather's connections with Fred Geier were more intimate. Merryweather, as an employee of Brown & Sharpe, would stop by the Mill while in Cincinnati to look over the competition. In 1900 George Merryweather was in charge of Brown & Sharpe's exhibit at the Paris Exposition. It was located just across the aisle from the Mill's. Sometime afterward Merryweather affiliated with the Acme Machinery Company of Cleveland.

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[8] Lou [unknown last name] (Cincinnati, OH.: Letters to Fred A. Geier for his birthday in 1916). Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

By the summer of 1904 Alfred Marshall decided to close the Cleveland office of Marshall & Huschart. Business there had not met his expectations. Edwin R. Motch indicated a desire to buy the Cleveland office and sought partners. Alfred Marshall was asking $10,000 for the sale of the Cleveland office. Edwin Motch found two partners. One was his brother, Stanley Motch, and the other was George Merryweather. Much of the backing required for the purchase came from Cincinnati. Fred Holz and Fred Geier lent George Merryweather money with no more security than Merryweather's life insurance policy—a loan based on little more than blind faith.

Fred Geier provided more than money, as George Merryweather recalled:

> At this time you loaned us more than real money, which was your hearty support in helping launch our little canoe in Cleveland with three paddles aboard [the three founders] and one at the stern [Fred A. Geier] to help steer. For some months we just pushed along in the mud...until a kind automobile industry threw us a line and towed us into deeper water where we could paddle good and hard some years and now and then sail a little.[9]

Any account of the Mill's domestic selling agencies must take note of the W. E. Shipley Machinery Company. This agency, founded in 1899 by W. E. Shipley, represented The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company in the Philadelphia area. W. E. Shipley was a brother of Murray Shipley, Jr., who was the vice president of the Lodge and Shipley Machine Tool Company. The agency represented the "Big Six" in the important mid-Atlantic market.

Foreign sales were important to the Mill. For example, in 1913 half of the Mill's sales were exports. Fred Geier was present at the beginning of foreign sales. In 1890 a cablegram from Berlin arrived at the Mill. The cablegram, transmitted in German, was an order for two Number 3 milling machines. Fred Geier replied to the agency, Schuchardt & Schutte, in German. Before World War I, Schuchardt & Schutte was the largest machine tool distributor in the world with offices on three continents. It was the beginning of the Mill's foreign sales.

Shortly thereafter a cablegram arrived from the firm of Charles Churchill & Co., Ltd. ordering two cutter grinders. This was the start of the Mill's business throughout the British Isles. In 1895 the House of Churchill took on the Cincinnati product line. The Mill's link with the English distributor, unlike the one with Schuchardt & Schutte, strengthened after the Great War. An article in the April 1936, issue of *The Milling Review* relates:

> From the beginning of the connection between the two companies many of our men went to England to work with the Churchill staff. The late Mr. Frederick A. Geier and Messrs. Wood Walter, Chace, Caldwell, F. V. Geier, Tangeman, Romaine, Pope and Einstein lent the aid of their experience to Churchill men in the selling of our machines.[10]

QUALITY AND DESIGN

A superior sales and marketing staff can do only so much. In the end, a buying decision is often determined by the quality of the product. Any quality analysis takes into account the craftsmanship and materials going into the manufacture of the product and the

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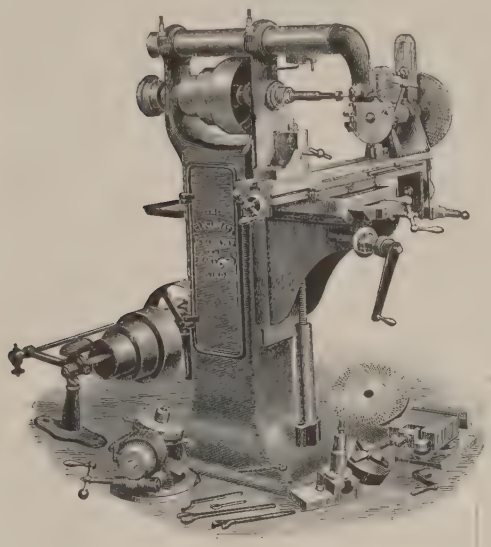
[9] George E. Merryweather, Testimonial letter to Fred A. Geier on the occasion of his fiftieth birthday, 15 June 1916. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[10] "The House of Churchill," *The Milling Review* 1, No. 5 (April 1936): 76.

productivity that is possible from the product's use. Also important are a product's advanced design, its utility and its ease of operation.



Universal Milling Machine

Gear Cutter (and Tool Grinder)

Innovations in milling machine design and technological milestones predated Fred Geier's appearance at the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company in 1887. At the 1884 Cincinnati Industrial Exposition the company was awarded a medal for the "best universal milling machine and gear cutter". This machine had two unique features: control levers were centralized for operator convenience and the direction of spindle rotation permitted standard boring tools, drills and reamers to be used as cutters. In a testimonial for the product, the Chicago electrical goods manufacturer, F. J. Hubbard & Co., would write, "The fact of having all the handles in one place makes it the most easily operated machine in the market."

In January 1886, Fred Holz and George Mueller patented a universal dividing head, which permitted machine operators to index a workpiece to any desired angle with great accuracy. Because these early company officers were inventors, they still spent time at their workbenches. Consequently, they were sensitive to many of those little details that made life easier for machinists. A testimonial from a New York foundryman praised Cincinnati's machines noting, "The dials are large, and you do not have to put on glasses to see the figures."

In 1900 Fred Geier attended the Paris Exposition, where The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was presented a gold medal for a new milling machine design. This universal miller incorporated the first all-gear positive-drive feed mechanism. Previously, all milling machines utilized a number of cones and belts in the rear of the column for obtaining the feed changes.

Shortly after the turn of the century it became evident that Fred Geier was using his considerable persuasive abilities to recruit and retain men who would distinguish themselves as machine tool engineers and inventors. George Mueller, who had collaborated with Fred Holz on the Mueller-Holz dividing head, had left the Mill in 1891 around the time of the

move to Spring Grove Avenue. He died ten years later at the age of 46. Fred Holz sold his interest in the Mill to Fred Geier in 1905. New talent was developed or recruited to fill the voids created by the departing pioneer inventors. One such talented individual who would flourish at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was Sol Einstein.

At age 25 the young German-Jewish man emigrated from his native country to New York City. The year was 1903. Einstein had attended the technical universities in Munich and Darmstadt. His scientific curiosity and his belief that shop workers had some answers resulted in his being fired from a German engine factory. The mingling of German laborers and staff was not an acceptable practice at the turn of the century.

Einstein's career at the Mill began on New Year's Eve in 1903. He was a draftsman at first and paid $12 a week. For the first few months he worked making tracings for milling machine parts. An easy job, but one that was monotonous. Einstein was very unhappy. However, he was soon noticed by Fred Holz, who handed him his first challenging assignment. Then Fred Geier returned from his European honeymoon. He called Sol Einstein to his office. This in itself, Einstein recalled in his memoirs, was considered an honor from his vantage point as a German immigrant.

Einstein later recalled that conversation, "The talk that Mr. Geier gave me of his trip to Europe, his experience with our agents there, and his plan for the future developments of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company were indeed revealing to me." Einstein concluded that there was a future for him at the Mill. Indeed there was. He became chief engineer in 1920, and four years later the patent department was formed under his guidance. Einstein was elected to The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company board of directors in 1927 and served on the board until 1955.

Einstein's earliest significant technical contributions centered on the high-power milling machine introduced in 1907, which took advantage of high-speed steel cutters, and the automatic milling machines of 1910. Robert Woodbury, a historian at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, wrote:

> Sol Einstein's device to add automatic feed to existing milling machines and his centralized automatic control heralded in 1910 the entrance of Cincinnati Milling Machine Company into the field of automatic control of milling machines in which they were to take the lead.[11]

The company that introduces a new machine often has an advantage and sometimes captures the entire business in that line. The Mill's competitors in Cincinnati (it is believed that eight firms built knee-and-column type milling machines) could not withstand the competition and one-by-one they went into other lines or went out of business.

Ranking up with Einstein among the Mill's outstanding designers was Adolph De Leeuw. A native of Holland, De Leeuw had received degrees in science as well as in mechanical and electrical engineering from the University of Leyden. His biographical sketch notes that he became chief engineer of the Mill in 1908, although it seems certain that he was previously employed as a consultant.

De Leeuw had been chief engineer at the Niles Tool Works in Hamilton, Ohio, where he was a pioneer in applying electric motors to machine tools. And while his years at the Mill were brief (in 1914 he became chief engineer of the Singer Manufacturing Company) they covered the period that witnessed his greatest career achievements.

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[11] Robert S. Woodbury, *History of the Milling Machine* (Cambridge, MA, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1960): 92,94.

De Leeuw is credited with laying out the Oakley plant and foundry. But De Leeuw's study of the relationship between the milling cutter and the milling machine is of greater importance in machine tool history. First, he established that milling cutters were not as strong as the machine that powered them. Consequently, they gave out long before the maximum power of the machine was attained. His research enabled the Mill to design and market a new cutter to correct the imbalance.

The new cutters, designed by De Leeuw, featured teeth that were more widely spaced. The result was a cutter that was more durable and more efficient in removing metal. The Dutch-born designer then devoted his energies to devising new cooling techniques to compensate for increased speed and improvements in feed mechanisms. During his lifetime De Leeuw, a prolific inventor, obtained more than 50 patents. But the most important of these related to the milling machine.

Historian Woodbury bestowed an accolade on the inventor and his employer when he wrote:

> To the genius of A. L. De Leeuw and the farsighted policy of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company must go the credit for bringing scientific methods to bear on the milling cutter, as Taylor and White had done for single-point tools.[12]

A list of all of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's outstanding machine tool designers would be long. The Mill's attention to design helped earn its reputation as the builder of quality products. Good design made the Mill's products more desirable. No detail was ignored.

It is said that an early shop superintendent and Mill director, Ernest M. Chace, inspected the finish of every milling machine before it was shipped. A paint job was important to Ernest Chace, even though it was only the finish on a milling machine. He retired during World War I when production was greatly increased. He felt that he would no longer be able to maintain his high standards.

LEADERSHIP WITHIN THE INDUSTRY

The U.S. machine tool industry was largely built in the nineteenth century by skilled machinists and inventors, who followed a trade that grew into a business. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the industry had matured. Increasingly, businessmen were heading the operations, which sold nationwide and internationally and they were concerned with price competition, tariff schedules and labor issues.

What would evolve into the machine tool industry's most prominent trade association began when William Lodge convened 17 lathe builders at Niagara Falls, New York, during the spring of 1902. Lodge, president of the Lodge and Shipley Machine Tool Company, planned to discuss mutual problems of pricing and costs. But the lathe builders concluded their interests were not unique: they were shared by all machine tool builders. They decided to establish an association which became known as the National Machine Tool Builders Association (NMTBA).

The first annual meeting of the association convened in Cleveland during October 1902. Thirty-three machine tool companies were represented and Fred A. Geier is listed as one of the charter members. While "the promotion of good fellowship" was a primary purpose of

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[12] Ibid., p. 81.

establishing the NMTBA, from the earliest times the association tackled industry issues of mutual interest. Its first stand, in 1902, was in opposition to the adoption of the metric system.

Soon the Association began tackling other questions such as standardization of machine tool parts and tariff revision. Fred Geier was vitally interested in tariff revision and in 1902 he would represent machine tool builders in testimony before the Senate Finance Committee.

Geier was probably as interested in the adoption of a uniform cost-accounting system as he was in the standardization of parts. Many tool builders knew their profit and losses but had little awareness of production costs or overhead. Prices were often based on competitive factors and not on actual costs. Without a uniform accounting system, comparisons were ambiguous.

During the spring of 1906 the NMTBA established a three-man committee consisting of Fred Geier, E. P. Bullard, Jr. and C. H. Abord to investigate accounting problems. They were charged with recommending a standard system of cost accounting "which will put all the builders in the field on the same basis and eliminate the possibility of anyone selling machinery unknowingly at a price below the cost of production."[13] A later study commissioned by the NMTBA in 1908 disclosed that less than a third of the association's members were using what accountants considered good accounting methods.

Fred Geier saw that the Mill kept current in the fields of bookkeeping and accounting. He was not about to be included among the unaware majority. During his presidency of the NMTBA in 1911 he invited Alexander Hamilton Church, a pioneer in shop- and cost-accounting, to address the body on Church's method of allocating overhead expense. Church visited Cincinnati in 1911 and listed "the leading machine tool company" in the city as a client of his consulting services. Fred Geier also fostered "scientific management." Frederick W. Taylor, the father of scientific management, was invited to address the association's convention in Atlantic City on his theories and efforts to improve management practices.

Fred Geier was also active in the National Metal Trades Association, which he helped to organize just before the turn of the century. The minutes for this association during the century's first decade portray Fred Geier as a tireless advocate of industrial education in all its forms: the University of Cincinnati's cooperative education program for engineers, the Ohio Mechanics' Institute, and vocational education programs in the public schools.

Cost accounting and scientific management were subjects he pushed at the NMTBA, but industrial education was the cause he championed at the Cincinnati branch of the Metal Trades Association. At the group's quarterly meeting on 20 December 1905, while chairman of the committee on cooperative education, Fred Geier reported that shops were not a proper place for training young machinists. He contended that "the rush and hurry incident to the constant demand for increased production interfered with the education of the apprentice." From surviving records of the local branch (1900-1915) we know that Fred Geier was never president. But the Mill was represented in the chairmanship at various times by Fred Holz and Philip O. Geier. The local branch was considered to be controversial in that it dealt with issues related to hiring, hours and unionization. In 1965 the Metal Trades Association adopted the name of the American Association of Industrial Management.

Fred Geier's involvement in trade association work continued throughout his life. In 1933 he assisted in organizing the Machinery and Allied Products Institute (MAPI), the first group of its kind to draw various machinery and allied products industries into a unified

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[13] Harless D. Wagoner, *The U.S. Machine Tool Industry from 1900 to 1950*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, The M.I.T. Press, 1968), p. 76.

organization. The Washington-based institute's membership is concentrated in the capital goods industries and includes 22 individual product-line associations.

BECOMING NUMBER ONE

Richard L. Crane, whose career in machine tools began as a sales demonstrator for the Mill, summed up Fred Geier's relationship to the industry in these words:

> Truly speaking, he has been to the Machine Tool business what Andrew Carnegie has been to the Steel business, a big and strong man, a master of his profession.[14]

There is no question that Fred Geier thought in big terms from the very beginning. From his first year with the Screw and Tap Company he voiced his conviction that the company would build the best milling machine in the United States. In the nineteenth century the best milling machine in the U.S. also meant the best milling machine in the world.

We have no documentation whether Fred Geier intended or dreamed of being the largest milling machine builder, although his comments to Henry Rose indicated that he intended to grow.[15] But being the biggest was likely an unspoken objective. That he liked to see expansion is certain. Shop Superintendent Ernest M. Chace wrote in 1916 near the end of his Mill career, "the plant has increased to about forty times the size that it was in 1892, and the output has increased somewhat beyond the $10,000 per month limit." Indeed, sales would reach a new yearly record of $4,830,000 in 1916.

Trade association compilations of milling machine production date to 1901. These tables reveal that The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company and Rhode Island's Brown & Sharpe constantly ranked in the top spots in industry production. Beginning in 1907 and 1908, the Mill placed first in milling machine production, but it was not until 1914 that it take the lead that would last for decades to follow.

Twelve years later, in 1926, the Mill would again wrest the number one position, this time for the top ranking in all machine tool sales. And again the chief rival was Brown & Sharpe. The Mill's entry into the grinding machine market during the early 1920s had helped boost sales. The NMTBA reported that the Mill shipped almost $5.1 million worth of machine tools in 1926 compared to Brown & Sharpe's $4.2 million.

THE MOVE INTO GRINDING MACHINES

The decade following World War I is frequently called the Roaring Twenties. This period of national prosperity ended with the stock market crash of October 1929. Few, other than business historians and economists, recall that the decade also began on a very sour note.

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[14] Richard L. Crane, Op. Cit.

[15] Henry Rose (1869-1937), a 47-year employee began his Mill career in 1889 and for many years he did all the shipping. In the beginning he kept the shipping records in a three-cent grocery book. Job specialization was not the norm in the early years and it seems that Rose was almost as much of a generalist as Fred A. Geier. Rose said, "I was the engineer, carpenter, glazier, floor sweeper and ice boy--in those days someone had to get the ice for our drinking water. I also did the odd painting around the shop, was the millwright and came to work early enough each morning to blow the whistle for the rest of the workers." See "Back in the Early Days: An Interview with Henry Rose, Old Timer No. 2," *Milling Review*, 1, No. 2 (1935): 4-6.

While the depression of 1920-1921 was short it was also quite severe. For Fred Geier and The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company it would turn out to be the worst economic period between the Panic of 1893 and the Great Depression.

When Fred Geier had his employees assembled in the company dining room on 30 March 1921 it was for a talk on the bearish business climate. He told the workers:

> If you want to get real blue just take a trip and visit machine tool factories over the country. Most of them, at least the majority of them, are shut down tight. Some of them won't live through the year 1921. The same is true of our customers. I don't know today of a single customer that is running full time.

Sales had fallen from $4,000,000 in 1920 to $818,000 in 1921, a 78 percent decrease. Employment fell an average of 75 percent from 1920 to 1921 and wage reductions and salary cuts were approved. The Mill's directors omitted three quarterly dividends to stockholders in 1921, sold stock the company owned in other companies, and dipped into cash reserves.

It was a desperate time and a time for retrenching. Desperate times are often best served by bold measures and it was in the midst of depression doldrums that the Mill's management undertook its first diversification: a new line was centertype grinding machines. In time the move into grinding machines would rank at the top of the Mill's smartest strategic decisions. In April 1921, management informed shareholders that "with any reasonable revival of business: the new line would help absorb overhead, help keep employees working and utilize idle plant capacity." In September 1921, the company acquired a controlling interest in a small 40-employee shop on Cincinnati's north side. The following year the building was sold and grinding machine production moved to Oakley.

The decision was not Fred Geier's alone and it was one that he is said to have concurred with only reluctantly. At 55 he may have become more cautious than he had been in younger years. It is said that Frederick V. Geier was instrumental in seeing that this crucial diversification was approved. The "Chief" was also reacting to entreaties from the Mill's leading distributor, Motch & Merryweather. The Cleveland-based agency had recently lost its line of centertype grinders and was looking for a replacement line.

Grinding machines have been important to three significant American industries: sewing machines, bicycles and automobiles. While the first two industries had peaked and ebbed long before the Roaring Twenties, the automobile industry was evolving into a giant.

But it was not in centertype grinding, where the part (such as a shaft) being machined is supported at each end and rotated as it moves into contact with a spinning abrasive wheel, that The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, made a great leap forward. Rather, it was in the field of centerless grinding, where the workpiece is not held on a fixed axis, rather, it is confined by a support blade and two opposed wheels, the grinding wheel and the regulating wheel.

The critical patents for centerless grinding were held by Lewis Heim. He was absorbed in developing his new grinding machine at the time of World War I. He offered to sell his patents to both Brown & Sharpe and to The Norton Company of Worcester, Massachusetts. They were not interested. Charles H. Norton scoffed, in Heim's presence, that his invention "was a passing fad" and "of no value." Charles Norton, like many engineers of that time, did not believe a centerless grinder could grind the work pieces round.

Engineers in the automobile industry, however, saw possibilities in centerless grinding. By the early 1920s centerless grinders were being built by the Heim Grinding Company,

As in the case of centertype grinding machines, Motch & Merryweather pulled the Mill into the production of centerless grinders. Sol Einstein recorded:

> None of these machines met the standards of the Ford Motor Company and they placed an order for 10 machines with Motch & Merryweather for the Sanford-type machine provided it could be built by a high-grade machine tool manufacturer. The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company accepted the order under the provision that we would redesign the Sanford machine on the principle of sound engineering. A license from the Sanford Company enabled us to manufacture this machine.[16]

The Mill's first Sanford-licensed centerless grinder was shipped 17 February 1922. Twenty-seven centerless grinders were produced the first year; 98 were shipped in 1923.

The question as to who, among the original four centerless grinder builders, held the basic patent was a matter of prolonged litigation. In 1924 the Mill bought the rights to Heim's patents. It would prove to be one of the most important acquisitions in the company's history. When the Heim patent was judged basic the Mill held ownership of the Sanford, Heim and Reeves patents.

It is not certain what the Mill paid for the Heim patents. The stories around Danbury mentioned figures of $750,000 or $1,000,000. Cecil Previdi, a Danbury resident employed by Lewis Heim, and later by The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, related, "He (Heim) was odd in some ways, for when the purchase price was decided on (which I understand from talk around town was $750,000) he wanted the money in gold coins, which were delivered by Walter Tangeman in a canvas bag deposited with the Danbury National Bank on Main Street in Danbury."

After February 1924, only the Mill and the Detroit Machine Tool Company remained as sellers of centerless grinding machines. During the summer of 1924, the Norton Company, manufacturers of grinding machinery and grinding wheels, of Worcester, Massachusetts, purchased the controlling interest in the Detroit Machine Tool Company. Norton was the world's largest producer of abrasives (e.g., grinding wheels) and the Mill was now reaching the top of the machine tool industry. The possibilities of the centerless grinders were becoming known to the "big companies" now. Only a few years earlier many engineers had concurred with Charles H. Norton's belief that the centerless grinder was of no value. Major manufacturers now realized that for cylindrical ground work, the centerless grinder outclassed any other machine tool for high speed and continuous production.

The final major litigation on the centerless grinder patents was decided in 1926. The case, in equity, was again before Judge Thomas's District Court for Connecticut. The legal citation reads "Heim Grinder Co. v. Fafner Bearing Co." But the Heim Company was now Cincinnati-owned and Fafner's defense was conducted by the Detroit Machine Tool Company, which manufactured the centerless grinders used by the Fafner Company. It was not commonly known, but the Mill had determined that the Detroit Machine Tool Company was controlled by the Norton Company. Patent infringement was the issue.

The trial was held at the Norwalk, Connecticut, Court House. A demonstration room for various centerless grinding machines was set up in a building a block away. Boston lawyers handled the defense while the plaintiff was represented by New York and St. Louis

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[16] Sol Einstein, "I Do Remember—Men, Machines and Plants Behind The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company," Manuscript transcribed by Mrs. Bertha Hamilton (August 1972). Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

The trial was held at the Norwalk, Connecticut, Court House. A demonstration room for various centerless grinding machines was set up in a building a block away. Boston lawyers handled the defense while the plaintiff was represented by New York and St. Louis counsel. Sol Einstein aided the plaintiff's case. The Detroit machine had its wheels facing in a vertical position rather than a horizontal one. A Heim grinder was placed on a holding platform or trundle that could be turned to a vertical position to prove that the Detroit grinder was no more advantageous than the horizontal ones. During the trial (court sessions lasted several weeks) Judge Thomas and court personnel frequently walked the block between the Court House and demonstration site.

The demonstration of the special Heim grinder was felt to have aided the plaintiff's case and Judge Thomas ruled on 17 May 1926 for Heim and Cincinnati. By court order, the Fafner Bearing Company had to discontinue use of its Detroit centerless grinders. Detroit, at first, intended to appeal, but on 1 February 1927 announced its decision to leave the business. The Detroit Machine Tool Company was dissolved on 20 April 1927.

Cincinnati's gain was Norton's loss. Robert Lawson, a fifty-year veteran of Norton and eventually head of its machine division, felt that his company's decision not to seek a license to allow it to stay in the centerless grinding field was a "bad mistake" because centerless grinding "became a big part of grinding and we just dropped out of it completely."[17]

The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company held all the valid patents on centerless grinding machines in the United States. For short periods of time the patents were also upheld in Great Britain and Germany. The Mill appreciated what it had won and continued to seek improvements in the grinder's design. Mill engineers, under the direction of Sol Einstein and George Binns, were able to tighten tolerances on automotive-engine piston pins from 0.0005 inches to 0.0001 inches. The end result was quieter, more powerful and more durable engines.

Manufacturers grew to love the centerless grinder because it allowed through-feeding and thus was grinding all the time. In centertype grinding time was lost placing work between centers and advancing the wheel to the work.

Over the years, the size and capacity of the machine increased. By 1940 it had been adapted to grinding assorted articles from tiny balance staffs to steel bars four-to-six feet in diameter and 20 inches in length. Such metal and glass items as piston pins and fountain pen barrels, bolts and bearings, fishing rods and anti-friction freight car axles were ground on centerless grinders. The original Heim through feed centerless grinder was a revolutionary development. Truly, the centerless grinder did grind round as billiard and bowling balls were ground on it.

The centerless grinder was a milestone in increasing production as is seen in the following table for grinding valve tappets for automobile engines.

YEAR	OPERATION	PIECES PER HOUR
1920	Centertype grinding	90
1923	Centerless infeed grinding; hand operated, chucked and ejected	150

[17] Robert Lawson interview, 21 July 1980. Quoted in Charles W. Cheape. *Family Firm to Modern Multinational: Norton Company, a New England Enterprise,* p. 158. Cambridge, Mass., and London, Harvard University Press, 1985.

YEAR	OPERATION	PIECES PER HOUR
1924	Centerless infeed grinding; hand operated and chucked, lever ejected	240
1925	Centerless infeed grinding; hand operated and chucked, automatic ejection	300
1927	Centerless infeed grinding; automatic operation, chucking and ejection	450
1929	Centerless infeed grinding; hopper supply, automatic operation, chucking and ejection. (One man operating three machines)[18]	1,350

In the early 1920s, Lewis Heim sent Cecil Previdi out to sell centerless grinders. He was told "not to come home until you sell one." His territory was "anywhere west of Albany" and he was to call on "anyplace you see a smokestack." By the end of the decade, after Cincinnati's lawyers had successfully defended the Heim patents and Cincinnati engineers had perfected the machine, all of industrial America would come to The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company for the centerless grinder.

[18] Sol Einstein, "Machine Tool Milestones—Past and Present," *Mechanical Engineering* (November 1930): 959. Also cited in Robert S. Woodbury's *History of the Grinding Machine*, p. 184.

CHAPTER IX

OTHER CLUBS, BUSINESS AND BANKING PURSUITS

Fred Geier belonged to many clubs and, as was his way in all aspects of his life, contributed to those social organizations. One biographical sketch noted his local membership in 21 associations including the Queen City, Cincinnati, Commercial, Cincinnati Country, and Camargo Country Clubs. And that was not an all-inclusive listing.[1]

Yet, in some ways he was not the ultimate club-man. Perhaps his many family, community, and business interests precluded expending his considerable but finite energies along these lines. Perhaps his brothers stood as his surrogate at times. For example, Philip Otto Geier was a member of the Masonic Order, Scottish Rite and the Shrine. And Dr. Otto Philip Geier was active in the Cincinnati Literary Club and the McDowell Society.

It is likely that Fred Geier's first social membership was in the Cincinnati Club. It was the Club that provided the setting for some of the most important events in his younger years. It was here in September 1900 that he and Harry Hoefinghoff were welcomed back to Cincinnati after their five-month trip to Europe and the Paris World Fair. At that time the Club's quarters were on the north side of Fourth Street above Herschede's jewelry store.

The Cincinnati Club at the turn-of-the-century was known as the Business Men's Club. It was organized in 1892 by 24 young men. None were over the age of 21 and their youth precluded their joining the Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants and Manufacturers Association. The club's purpose was simply, "To promote the best interests of Cincinnati." Dues were said to be $1.00 a year.

Fred Geier was never president of the Business Man's Club, although he headed the Club's committee promoting industrial education. He is likely to have joined the club in the late 1890s when another man destined to become a giant of American industry became club president for 1897-1898. That man was George Matthew Verity, who headed a struggling iron and steel business in Newport, Kentucky. In his second year of membership Verity was nominated for the club presidency and conducted a campaign featuring the slogan, "Vim-Vigor-Verity." He was easily elected, and during his presidential term the club's membership increased to over 500.

The Business Men's Club was a positive influence on Verity. In his biography, *True Steel,* Verity was quoted: "Before I joined the club I thought I was too busy to think about the problems of my neighbors. After I joined it, I saw that I was part of the community and belonged to it. It was one of the most important moves I ever made. It showed me that I couldn't live by myself, sufficient unto myself."

The Business Men's Club provided a variety of athletic facilities, especially after it took quarters in the Phoenix at Ninth and Race Streets in 1924. But it is likely that the Club's sponsorship of a variety of civic projects prompted Geier's participation. Among early causes were fall festivals, Ohio River improvements, city parks and public baths, trade excursions and the annexation of suburbs.

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[1] He was a member of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, American Institute of Banking, the National Municipal League, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education, Chamber of Commerce of the United States, American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, the Cincinnati Musical Festival Association, Cincinnati Institute of Fine Arts, Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati Art Club, Orpheus Club, Riding Club, Cincinnati Automobile Club, and the Engineers Club.

In 1926 the Business Men's Club was renamed "The Cincinnati Club." At that time it had moved into its new quarters, a $1,250,000 investment, on Garfield Place. The building committee, consisting of 18 prominent Cincinnati men, included Fred A. Geier and his cousin August H. Tuechter.

THE COMMERCIAL CLUB

While the Cincinnati Club was the setting of some of Fred Geier's dearest private occasions, it was through the Commercial Club of Cincinnati that he mixed with many of the famous newsmakers of both Cincinnati and the world. In the 28 years (1906-1934) of his Commercial Club membership he served as president (1912-1913), vice-president (1911-1912), treasurer (1909-1910) and as a member of the executive committee (1907-1908, 1908-1909, 1917-1918).

The Commercial Club of Cincinnati has always been an exclusive body with an active membership limited to 50 men. Founded in 1880, it has included most of the outstanding industrial, commercial, cultural and professional men of the Queen City. Walter C. Langsam recorded in his history of the Commercial Club that 63 percent of the membership during 1972 were listed in *Who's Who In America*. The various club constitutions from its founding to the late-1940s all began with the club's purpose:

> For the purpose of promoting the commercial prosperity of Cincinnati, by social intercourse and an exchange of views, THE COMMERCIAL CLUB is hereby organized, and the following articles have been adopted.

Fred A. Geier was elected to membership in the Commercial Club on 17 March 1906. He had been proposed for membership by Thomas P. Egan a few months, or possibly a few years, earlier. The record is not clear. Mr. Egan addressed the membership on the subject of accepting inevitable change. He noted that the decline in Ohio River traffic was made up one-hundred-fold by railroads. He further noted that the ebbing of the pork-packing industry was more than offset by emerging new business.

It was clear that Mr. Egan had the machine tool industry in his mind when he proposed for membership three of the industry's leaders: William Lodge, Richard K. LeBlond and Fred A. Geier. His supporting commentary on Geier would not have been considered unusual for an obituary but was a strong endorsement, indeed, for a man just entering mid-life. Egan said:

> The third man on the list is also a native of this city. He is Frederick A. Geier. He is genius on order and a believer in research. He believes machine tools are about to change the shape of the world. He has outgrown two shops and now has dreams of a large and better equipped shop that will be greater than anything America has known. The thing about Mr. Geier is that he is not content with dreams but makes them into realities.

Geier could not have been elected at a more auspicious time. For it was during 1906-1907 that the membership had its most newsworthy experience. Along with members of the Commercial Clubs of Boston, Chicago and St. Louis a journey to witness and report on the construction of the Panama Canal.

Fred Geier was also a participant in one of the Commercial Club's most notable outings, a trip from 18-22 June 1911, to Washington, DC, to participate in the silver wedding anniversary of President and Mrs. William Howard Taft. Highlights of that excursion

included the taking of a group photograph with the President on the steps of the President's office and a luncheon with the Chief Executive at the Chevy Chase Country Club.

At the luncheon, Commercial Club President James A. Green presented a large silver bowl, said to have been of an exclusive design of Tiffany and Company, to the President to be given to Mrs. Taft. The minutes from that outing reveal that:

> After the presentation, the President responded most feelingly, and said how very much he appreciated our coming, and how pleased he was to be with Cincinnati home friends, and how much he longed to be back in Cincinnati again, when his Washington life was over...
>
> [That evening] the Club again assembled, and proceeded in a body to the Reception given in the White House grounds by President and Mrs. Taft, in honor of their Silver Wedding Anniversary. About four thousand guests were in line...[but] ...when our arrival was announced, as the President's special guests, we were taken ahead of all others.

The "Silver Wedding" outing then proceeded aboard naval vessels to Old Point Comfort, Fortress Monroe, and Williamsburg, Virginia. It easily ranks as "one of the most eventful and enjoyable trips" undertaken by the Commercial Club.

Some years later, in May 1930, the Commercial Club journeyed again to Washington to celebrate a silver anniversary of William Howard Taft's 25 years' membership in the Commercial Club. And again a silver flower bowl was presented to Mr. Taft, at the time Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. At the Congressional Club luncheon for the chief justice and former-president, President Calvin Coolidge made an appearance and was introduced to each Commercial Club member.

The Commercial Club was one to commemorate anniversaries. It was decided to celebrate the Commercial Club's Golden Anniversary during 1930 with a nine-day outing to Cuba. Some years earlier, in 1907, there had been a two-day stopover in Cuba on the Commercial Club's return home from its visit to Panama. Thirty-six club members made the trip to Cuba where they were received at the residence of U.S. Ambassador Harry M. Guggenheim and entertained at lunch by the Cuban President, Gerado Machado, at his residence. There was a bit of a "busman's holiday" in this outing as visits were made to various rum, sugar, and other agricultural enterprises.

There was respite, too, from the grand banquets and effusive speeches. During this Cuban excursion some members visited fronton jai alai for the first time. And it is recorded that, "Through the courtesy of the Mayor of Havana, the group was escorted by a captain of police for 'a glimpse...into the devious paths and byways of the frivolous and carefree life of residents and visitors in Havana.'"

It was at one of the formal banquets, replete with toasts and flowery speeches, that Fred Geier offered some thought on the founding members of the Commercial Club of Cincinnati and on the attributes required of present and future members. The remarks were printed in William F. Wiley's 92-page history, *A Trip to Cuba, In Retrospect*:

> If our Cuban friends will bear with me for just a moment, I would like to express a few sentiments which are quite personal.
>
> I could not help but feel that it is permissible on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of a Club that was founded with highest ideals to recall the memory of those men who preceded us. We cannot let this Golden Anniversary go by without remembering the men who founded the Club.

Recently, some of the fine members of this Club have passed to a great beyond. It seems to me, that on this night they are beckoning to us and challenging us in such a manner that we cannot allow this night to go by without pausing a moment to remember them, and, if possible, some of the inspirations that in the past they have given to this great club of ours. It seems to me gentlemen, that after coming to this beautiful island and having few days forgotten some of the trials and tribulations that we have to return to; forgotten the responsibilities that some of us must carry through the days that we still live; it is only fitting that we stop a moment and remember the traditions that founded this Club. Our beloved city owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to those men that have gone beyond; that have given us the inspiration to serve our city and our country, and I would like to ask you gentlemen tonight to remember those men that have gone before us—to rededicate ourselves to the tasks that lie before us.

The world needs men of vision; it needs men of ideals; it needs men of knowledge. The world is before us and is calling upon us in a manner that it has never called before. Cincinnati, the city that we love, is calling upon us, and I think it is a fitting occasion for the Commercial Club of Cincinnati, to which supposedly only men are called that are willing to give fully, wholeheartedly, and without any restraint of the best that is in them of the finest instincts they are capable of, and I ask you to stand and rededicate yourselves to all that is good for Cincinnati, good for the State of Ohio, good for the United States, and good for all the world. Let us help the onward march of civilization of this world in which we live.[2]

Special circumstances may have prompted Geier's remarks which rank among his most eloquent. Only a few days earlier, on 9 March, word had been received of the death of William Howard Taft. Fred Geier had not only visited Washington and the White House with the Commercial Club but stayed there as President Taft's guest when he testified on tariff legislation and when he headed the National Prosperity League on Taft's behalf during the 1912 presidential campaign.

The Commercial Club of Cincinnati, in its first 50 years, had frequently attracted presidential cabinet members and other national and international personages as guest speakers. But the eight meetings presided over by Fred Geier during his term as Club President (1912-1913) were largely devoted to Cincinnati concerns. Politics may well have played a part in who was asked to speak. The national Republican Party was divided, and after the 1912 elections, defeated. There was not much likelihood that prominent Democrats allied with Woodrow Wilson would be invited to speak to a predominately Republican Club in William Howard Taft's hometown.

And such club topics as "The Relation of Medical Research to Commercial Life" and "The University of Cincinnati and Its Influence" (both on 23 November 1912) and "Social Betterment, a Function of Municipal Government" (20 December 1912) undoubtedly were inspired in part by Dr. Otto P. Geier, a leading official in Cincinnati Mayor Henry T. Hunt's administration. Indeed, Hunt, Dr. Geier, Rev. J. O. Hunt, and Richard T. Crane were the panelists at the Club's meeting on 20 December.

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[2] William F. Wiley, *A Trip to Cuba, In Retrospect,* (Cincinnati, by the Commercial Club, 1930), 70-72.

THE TRIP TO PANAMA

Fred Geier became a member of the Commercial Club of Cincinnati on 17 May 1906. It was a time of America's Manifest Destiny and this destiny was dear to the business community. The Commercial Club was no exception to this enthusiasm. During Fred Geier's first year of membership, the club was absorbed with the possibilities of trade with and investment in the Caribbean islands and Latin American republics.

At the Commercial Club's annual dinner meeting on 23 November 1906, Secretary of State Elihu Root spoke on "The New Trade Route and our Foreign Relations with our Sister South American Republics." The Ministers of Bolivia, Peru and Columbia were also in attendance and addressed the gathering. The speeches were well planned and preparatory for what is still considered to be the most significant outing undertaken by the four sister Commercial Clubs (Cincinnati, Boston, Chicago and St. Louis). That trip was a visit to the Panama Canal Zone with stops en route and on return to St. Thomas, Virgin Islands; Puerto Rico, Jamaica and Cuba. The journey took place from 18 February to 14 March 1907.

While privately funded (the 36 Cincinnati Commercial Club members were each assessed $350 plus a general assessment of $100 on the membership) the trip received official encouragement and cooperation. Then Secretary of War William Howard Taft told his Cincinnati Commercial Club colleagues that "nothing would give the President [Mr. Theodore Roosevelt] and the gentlemen charged with the responsibility for the construction of the canal greater pleasure than a visit by such representative men as the members of [the four clubs] to the Isthmus, for the purpose of observing the work which is going on."

Construction of the Panama Canal had only recently begun and there were many who wondered whether a sea-level canal through Nicaragua wouldn't have been a preferable alternative. Cincinnati Commercial Club members were largely responsible for putting the foremost proponent of a canal across the Panamanian Isthmus, Colonel Bunau-Varilla, in contact with fellow Ohioans who were national decision-makers: Senator Mark Hanna and President William McKinley.

A joint committee of the four clubs made travel arrangements which included chartering the steamship *Prinz Joachim* from the Hamburg-American Line in New York. The 373-foot vessel, built for travel in the tropics, sailed from Charleston, South Carolina, on 20 February 1907 for what would be a 5,660 mile journey.

It was a voyage as relaxing or activity-filled as each member desired—or as was possible in what was described as an "Eveless Eden." Sundays aboard ship brought forth appropriate religious observances and here Fred Geier's musical talents were recognized. The *Prinz Joachim* carried a German band and it was enhanced by an ad hoc choir under the direction of Lawrence Maxwell, Jr., former Solicitor General for President Cleveland. Maxwell trained a choir, composed of 13 Commercial Club members, that included Fred Geier and Nat Henchman Davis of Cincinnati, Cyrus McCormick of Chicago, and Mr. Chatfield. A German orchestra playing "good American hymns" for an Episcopal prayer service were three elements that blended to make a memorable occasion. The three Sundays at sea were "Sabbaths well spent."

From Charleston, the *Prinz Joachim* briefly put into port at Charlotte Amalia, where the merchants remained open on a Sunday as a local newspaper, the St. Thomas *Tidende* reported, "The billionaires on the *Prinz Joachim* are due tomorrow. As a matter of accommodation, we learn that His Honor, the Police Master, has given permission to merchants to open their stores both tomorrow and next Sunday during the time that the tourist steamer is in port. This deserves thanks."

THE CHOIR

From left to right: Standing—F. A. Geier, S. Parker Bremer, H. S. Warren (Surgeon), W. B. Lawrence, A. H. Chatfield, Benj. Carpenter, C. H. McCormick, H. C. Yeiser. Sitting—N. H. Davis, Robt. A. Boit, Henry C. Scott, Lawrence Maxwell, Jr., Edward Goepper, Geo. M. Wight, Hanford Crawford.

From there the voyage continued to San Juan. While the prominent American businessmen were indeed entertained royally, there were considerable elements of genuine adventure. In Puerto Rico Fred A. Geier, along with other members of the travel party, journeyed by carriages the 81 miles from San Juan to the island's second city, Ponce. The *Prinz Joachim* had sailed around the island to Ponce and from there would proceed to Cristopal in Panama. The overland journey, partly undertaken through the night, traversed mountains with heights of 2,400 feet. It took 11 somewhat anxious hours for all the travellers to arrive in time for the ship's sailing.

In a special message to Congress delivered on 17 December 1906 President Theodore Roosevelt remarked about the contemplated trip of the four Commercial Clubs. He said, "It will offer as witnesses of the exact conditions men whose experiences as business men and whose impartiality will make the result of their observations of value to the country as a whole."

While under sail to Panama the Commercial Clubs' observers divided into eight groups in order to study efficiently significant areas related to the Canal's construction.[3] Fred Geier

[3] The eight groups were: (1) Sanitary and Hygenic Conditions, (2) Plan of Management, (3) Social and Racial Conditions, including Welfare and Ethical Questions, (4) Housing and Food, (5) Climate and its

was part of a group whose somewhat unwieldy title was "Efficiency of the Plant, including the Railroad." Its mandate was to report on the machinery, tools and appliances in use, as well as the condition and operation of the railroad. Steam shovels, docks and terminals also fell to the group's oversight and examination.

Each group had a leader. Elihu Thomson, an electrical engineer with General Electric and a member of the Boston Commercial Club, chaired the group to which Geier belonged. The group was satisfied with what it observed. The group's report concluded with the words, "In general, it may be said that the plant when completed, will be well balanced and capable of being used economically to accomplish the work for which it has been established."[4]

Observation of the Canal was the primary mission of those aboard the *Prinz Joachim*. But a secondary purpose may well have been to acquaint prominent and influential American citizens about grave political, economic and humanitarian problems on the islands of the "American Mediterranean."

Jamaica was visited en route home from Panama. Wiley described the government of this British colony as a "procrustean form of politics." The poverty, misery and destruction of the island's capital of Kingston, which had suffered damage from an earthquake, showed the group a view of dismal reality. Far more enjoyable was a countryside excursion to Boca del Aqua (The mouth of the waters). Writing of the descent into the gorge Wiley said, "The star apple, the palms, the bamboo cling to the mountain sides while all about them in profusion were ferns and plants and vines of great variety." He further marveled, "This is like riding for miles through some vast greenhouse."

After Jamaica, the final stopover on the itinerary was Cuba. No Caribbean island offered such possibilities and problems as "The Pearl of the Antilles." While most members of the Commercial Clubs chose to sail between several Cuban ports-of-call, Fred Geier elected to journey overland from Guantanamo to Havana. The travellers traversed three-quarters of the length of the island, using at times trains making their inaugural runs on newly-opened lines. The group's itinerary went through territory as big as Pennsylvania. Only half of the land had been cleared. Fred Geier experienced Cuba face-to-face and up-close. He would observe first-hand the agricultural potential of the rich virgin limestone soil. The links American business men and investors were then establishing in Cuba would continue for more than a half century until Fidel Castro's revolution brought about yet another new order for the island's economy and government.

Fred A. Geier, a son of the American West, was well acquainted through business with the East. This child of the New World had already made several voyages to the Old World to which he was linked by family and cultural ties. But it can be said that it was the Commercial Club of Cincinnati that offered Geier a personal acquaintanceship with other parts of the world and with national leaders. And no event fostered such an acquaintanceship more than the trip to Panama in 1907.

ORGANIZER OF THE CINCINNATI MORRIS PLAN BANK

In October 1918, the Cincinnati Morris Plan Bank was opened under Ohio laws with Fred A. Geier as its first president. Morris Plan banks were named after Arthur J. Morris

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Effects upon Americans, (6) Efficiency of Labor, (7) Progress of the Works, and (8) Efficiency of the Plant, including the Railroad.

[4] Wiley, *A Trip to Cuba, In Retrospect*, p. 154.

(1880-1973) who organized banks to make loans without collateral to employed workers on the basis of their earning capacity and character.

As a young attorney in Norfolk, Virginia, Morris was often asked by his clients for aid in obtaining loans. He then conducted a survey that revealed that many loan applicants were refused and, hence, compelled to borrow at exorbitant rates. To fill the need for providing consumer loans to workers at reasonable rates of interest, he opened the first Morris Plan bank in Norfolk on 10 April 1910. Soon other Morris Plan banks were established in Richmond, Baltimore, Atlanta, and Washington, D.C.

Many Cincinnati workers also had a need for personal loans that carried a reasonable rate of interest. Fred Geier, who was a director of four banks, recognized that need. In the early years of the century, banks largely catered to industrial and commercial customers. Personal loans to workers were frowned upon if not actually forbidden. In a financial emergency the worker had no place to go except to the loan companies, most of which charged three per cent a month.

There were five Cincinnati businessmen who "believed in the honesty of the little fellow" and set out to bring a Morris Plan bank to Cincinnati. The five were: Fred A. Geier, Simon Kuhn, August H. Tuechter, Frederick W. Hinkle, and Charles A. Hinsch.[5]

The five assembled a group of 24 prominent businessmen and professionals. Fred Geier's influence was undoubtedly felt in the selection of the directors. One was C. W. Bookman who, as chairman of the Associated Charities, combined social concerns with financial accountability. The initial group of directors included W. A. Julian, a Treasurer of the United State; W. E. Keplinger, President of the Peters Cartridge Company; Charles Hinsch, President of the Fifth-Third Union Trust Company; William Cooper Procter, President of the Procter and Gamble Company; and August Tuechter, President of the Cincinnati Bickford Company.

If the list of early directors was impressive, the bank's first facility was less so. The Morris Plan Bank was housed in half of the first-floor of a two-story brick building that stood at 117 East Sixth Street. The modest bank facility might have been selected by design, for there were workers who were intimidated by the marble and mahogany adorning the stately offices of the other banks. When the Morris Plan Bank later built a new building on the same site, Fred A. Geier, alone of the directors, desired that the bank occupy the second floor and rent the street level.

As bank president, Geier's interest extended far beyond the bank's purpose and philosophy to its personnel. The Morris Plan Bank's third and last president, Herbert F. Koch, was a distant relative of his through the Esselborns. P. Willard Crane wrote that in 1919 his uncle wanted to include Koch as a candidate for bank positions. Koch, although related and Frederick V. Geier's classmate at the Franklin School, was said to have never formally met Fred A. Geier. "Thus, one morning I took Herb down to the house and introduced him. Uncle Fred liked him and felt he was qualified so he was given the job."[6]

That Koch liked Fred Geier is apparent by his diary entry the day Fred died. On 27 March 1934, Koch penned the following, "Just cannot believe he is dead. This will be a terrible blow to the bank as he was really the only officer that took a real interest and had a

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[5] See "Milestones Reached by Local Concerns; Guardian Bank 30 Years Old, Carey 75." *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 3 October 1948.

[6] Letter of P. Willard Crane to James E. Schwartz, 13 November 1991.

vision for the future of the institution. While Mr. Keplinger is alright he has not the interest nor the grasp of what it is all about."[7]

The death of Fred A. Geier was a turning point in the Morris Plan Bank in Cincinnati even though it survived, with steady growth, until the late 1940s. Geier family involvement in the bank continued for a few more years as Frederick V. Geier was elected to the Morris Plan Bank board. However, that association ended after 1937, for in that year the Federal Reserve Board passed a ruling preventing a bank director from serving on more than one board. In one stroke half of the bank's 12-member board was replaced. Many of those who were compelled to resign had the greatest interest in the bank and were among its staunchest advocates. Among the directors leaving were the two vice presidents, Maurice J. Freiberg and Robert A. Cline.

In 1937 the Cincinnati Morris Plan Bank changed its name to "The Guardian Bank and Savings Company." The name change was to distance the Cincinnati bank from the several Morris Plan banks elsewhere that had failed. Local management feared that many people would suspect the Cincinnati bank was financially linked to insolvent Morris Plan banks in Missouri and Arizona. The local bank had also expanded its banking services into the commercial banking arena and felt that the old name was limiting.

The faith Fred A. Geier and the other founders had in the Morris Plan principle that "Character is the Basis of Credit" was justified. When, in October 1948, the bank observed its 30th (and last) anniversary it was reported that over three decades "...the bank has had to write-off as losses only between one-fourth to one-half of one per cent."[8]

The end of the bank's existence was in the works even prior to the anniversary. The younger directors had little time for bank affairs and Bank President Koch, now 54, was receptive to other career opportunities. His wife of many years, Mercede, was terminally ill and would die before the year was over. The bank was also having problems obtaining deposits sufficient to meet loan demand.

Thus, in July 1948, when Fifth-Third explored acquiring the bank, Koch and the directors were ready for a sale. Fifth-Third proposed concentrating all of their consumer credit business in the Guardian Bank, with Guardian doing all of the consumer credit lending and supervising for their 23 branches. Koch was to be in charge as senior vice-president. Guardian stock had been around $160 a share; Fifth-Third's offer to buy came to $225-$250 a share. But, at the Guardian stockholders' meeting on 2 December 1948 the shareholders voted overwhelmingly against accepting the Fifth-Third offer.

The Morris Plan Corporation of America, which held approximately 10 percent of the stock in the Guardian Bank, had offered to pay $275 per bank share. It was an offer the shareholder accepted. The Morris Plan of America Corporation at the time stated that it did not intend to continue the Guardian Bank's operation. Its purpose in acquiring the local bank was to liquidate it by selling its assets. This was done in short order. On 28 May 1949 the remaining shareholders of The Guardian Bank and Savings Company voted to place the bank in voluntary liquidation. Contracts were approved between the bank and the City Loan and Savings Company of Lima, Ohio, for the loan accounts, and with Provident Savings Bank and Trust Company for the deposits, property, and assets.

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[7] Herbert F. Koch diary, Vol. 298, January - April 1934, Tuesday, 27 March 1934.

[8] Frank J. Ruhl, "Milestones Reached By Local Concerns; Guardian Bank 30 Years Old, Carey 75." *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 3 October 1948.

Certainly there was a touch of irony in that the Cincinnati Morris Plan Bank that Fred A. Geier established as an alternative to unreasonable loan rates was forced out of existence by the national Morris Plan organization. Part of the local bank's assets were acquired by a finance company whose many loans carried the high rates of interests Geier had earlier labored against.

BUSINESS INTERESTS

There is a maxim that if an organization hopes to accomplish something it should be headed by a busy person. After the turn of the century The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was positioned for continuing growth. Fred A. Geier could have withdrawn completely to deal with company affairs. But this is the period in which Cincinnati business, financial and philanthropic communities reached out to him. He appears to have rarely turned down their entreaties.

C. Wood Walter wrote in 1916:

> I think it was about this time [1902], or perhaps a few years later, that Fred accepted his initial Directorship. I believe it was in the German National Bank. This was the first fatal step. After that he was 'directored' about fifteen times, and from that time on, our once carefree Fritz began to have his waking and also some of his sleeping hours 'scheduled.'"[9]

It is not surprising that Fred Geier, who took courses at Nelson Business College and was once, briefly, a small town Kansas banker, should have received his first directorship from a bank.[10] There is a published account that his father, Philip, had been a director of the German National Bank, but this is not confirmed by the bank's minute books.

It was the death of Captain Henry Bremfoerder, a Civil War veteran, during September 1902, that created a vacancy on the bank's board. A nominating committee comprised of Louis S. Levi, Louis Hauck and George H. Bohrer proposed Fred Geier for the vacant position. He was elected on 17 October 1902 and remained active on the board to the time of his death. In June 1916, bank president Bohrer wrote "...the Bank can be congratulated in having the counsel and advice of Mr. Geier."

An observer of Queen City banks, Guido Gorres, once remarked that the German National Bank was a bank of German-American machine tool men and brewers. The bank's association with the Geiers and Tuechters confirms a machine tool connection. More apparent was its relationship with brewing and distilling enterprises. Various Haucks, Moerleins, Windisches, Muelhausers and Levis were stockholders, directors or officers of the bank.[11]

Five years later Geier added two additional bank directorships. One was a mainline Cincinnati institution, the oldest incorporated trust company in Ohio. The other was a new

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[9] C. Wood Walter, Letter to Fred A. Geier for his birthday in 1916. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

[10] Actually Fred Geier's director's experience began in 1887 when he became a director of the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company. At the end of his life, in addition to being president of the Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, he was president of Cincinnati Grinders Incorporated, the Factory Power Company, and the Factory Colony Company.

[11] In the heat of the anti-German fervor during World War I the bank changed its name to the Lincoln National Bank. It was acquired by Fifth-Third in 1955.

suburban bank. Both directorships appear related to the tremendous growth of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company and the Oakley Factory Colony.

Shortly after Geier became president of the Mill in 1905, he had initiated the grandest, and many felt riskiest, move in the company's history. The Mill, which had outgrown its Spring Grove Avenue location, was to be part of a pioneer industrial park in Oakley, the Factory Colony Company. Since many bankers were skeptical of this venture—as were even less daring relatives and Mill officers—financing was problematic. It seems certain, however, that the Central Trust and Safe Deposit Company's president, Nathaniel H. Davis, helped find funds.

In 1906 Nat. Henchman Davis, as he was generally known, was elected a director of the Mill. He may be considered to be the first outside director. And in a reciprocal action, Fred A. Geier became a member of the bank's board of directors. Geier, appointed on 14 January 1907, would remain on the board to the time of his death. The Central Trust memorial resolution noted that the board had lost "a true friend" and that Geier "...took an active part in the negotiations which resulted in the consolidation with the Citizens National Bank and Trust Company in 1927."

Nat. Henchman Davis was one of the five incorporators of the Factory Colony Company. Few bankers felt that the venture would be a success. A leading local banker had turned down a loan to Fred and Philip O. Geier "for their own good." An attorney, a realtor, and a whiskey distiller and wholesaler completed the fearless five incorporators.

The promise and prospect of the Factory Colony Company was responsible for Fred Geier's appointment to a second bank board in 1907. In this case the bank was a new institution, the Oakley Bank, that had found space for a small office. The office was located in the Oakley Volunteer Fire Department headquarters at Madison Road and Brazee Street. At the time Oakley was no more than a village with several hundred inhabitants.

With the success of the Factory Colony and with other substantial factory enterprises, such as LeBlond and U.S. Playing Card, flourishing in nearby Norwood, Oakley was beginning to experience a population boom. The Oakley Bank prospered as is indicated by the substantial Oakley Bank building that was constructed on the former fire department site. In 1930 the Oakley Bank merged with the Fifth-Third Union Trust Company. A newspaper account a few years later described the former Oakley Bank as being "...the largest suburban bank in Hamilton County."[12]

Serving on four bank boards and the several subsidiary companies affiliated with the Oakley Factory Colony and the Mill did not exhaust Fred Geier's capacity for directorships. His business posts included being president of the Cincinnati Rubber Manufacturing Company and directorships with the Cincinnati Bickford Tool Company, the Cincinnati Union Terminal Company, the Cincinnati Realty Company, and the Rookwood Pottery. He was also a trustee of the Union Central Life Insurance Company.

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[12] "Anniversary of Bank Founding Celebrated," *Cincinnati Times-Star*, 4 June 1936.

CHAPTER X

WELFARE CAPITALISM

By definition, American welfare capitalism can be described as any service provided for the comfort or improvement of workers which was neither required by legislation nor a necessity of industry. The furnishing of these various services was seen by many enlightened early twentieth-century American businessmen as a solution to problems in labor-management relations. Rapid job turnover and the threat of a strike were troublesome matters for most cost-conscious businessmen. Programs tailored for the betterment of the worker and his family were felt to increase the worker's loyalty to his employer.

The roots of welfare capitalism go back to the beginning of American industry itself. Samuel Slater, called the "Father of American Manufacturers," offered in 1790 to keep a Sunday School where his cotton spinning mill boys could learn on their day off. At the dawn of the twentieth century, Miami Valley companies like the National Cash Register Company and Procter & Gamble pioneered such policies as profit sharing and wellness programs.

Welfare capitalism at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company developed in a big way only after Fred A. Geier's brother, Dr. Otto P. Geier, began a Mill career in 1914. The Employee Services Department he headed combined most of the corporate welfare programs that the company initiated and supported. Before the New Deal era and a "car in every garage," the Mill loomed large in a worker's life.

A worker might live in a flat or home outside the Mill's entrance owned by the Cincinnati Model Homes Company. Fred A. Geier was a long-time director and assured that Mill employees had first choice when a vacancy occurred. The employee ate lunch at the company dining room while listening to the Mill band or, perhaps, watching a movie. Before work the employee could drop off a shopping list at the company store; it would be filled by the end of the day.

After work the employee might play baseball in a company league or tennis on courts on company grounds. If the worker lived in Cincinnati, he would hurry to catch a five-cent ride on the "factory special" train. He might stay at the shop, however, to take a night class in one of the technical education classes. He might also decide to learn or to improve his skills in English, which was taught during the World War I era as part of an "Americanization" program. It was said English was second to German in some departments in the early years.

A worker would probably take home the *Employees' Service News*, a company magazine, or check out a book from the public library branch at the Mill. Or he might decide to tend his garden plot on the company ground. Should he become sick or injured, he expected to see Dr. Geier or the other doctors and dentists hired by the company. And, if the employee desired, his young child could receive a free examination as part of the Better Baby Contests at the annual company outing at the Cincinnati Zoo.

In good times Mill employees might add to their savings accounts, which were first opened in their names by Fred Geier as a Christmas gift. In hard times they might seek an installment loan at the Morris Plan Bank, a pioneering bank serving industrial workers, whose president was Fred Geier.

INDUSTRIAL MEDICINE

When, in April 1914, Dr. Otto P. Geier brought his doctor's satchel into the Mill and set up an office he established an early industrial medical department. The health care and treatment of the employees of a growing industrial enterprise might have satisfied another physician. But it is unlikely that such a restrictive operation was what Fred and Otto Geier had in mind.

The title Dr. Geier preferred was that of the Mill's Director of Employees' Service. Fred wanted his brother to be in charge of labor relations and personnel, of safety and medicine. And Dr. Geier, whose reputation as a crusader dated back to the turn of the century when he charged Cincinnati milk dealers with supplying inferior milk to their customers, envisioned The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company as an industrial laboratory where his ideas on realizing the highest human potential might be tried and proven.

Dr. Geier credited his older brother's persuasiveness, during a winter trip to New Orleans in 1914, with bringing him to the Mill. He wrote, "That three weeks of Mardi Gras and winter golf qualified me for business."[1] But during February and March, Dr. Geier immersed himself in the task of visiting and talking with the nation's pioneers in industrial medicine. He spent considerable time with Andrew Harvey at the Crane Company's medical department in New York City and with A. W. George, who was establishing himself as Chief Surgeon at Packard Motor Company.

The components of the employees' services program began cautiously, as this was a field dominated by a few trail-blazing medical directors. The industrial aspects of preventive medicine and public health received Dr. Geier's attention at first. But there is little question that the "Big Chief" expected his brother to become involved with the whole question of personnel and labor-organizations, contracts, attitudes and conditions.

An examination at the "all-day dispensary."

[1] "A Few Shots from Otto P. Geier," Letter to Fred A. Geier from Otto P. Geier for his birthday in 1916. Archives, Cincinnati Milacron, Cincinnati.

What is taken for granted today, that an enlightened company has an interest in the health of its employees, was a radical concept in 1914. This was perhaps most notably true in the case of pre-employment and employment physicals. Such screening helps to identify physical problems and allow management to better match employees with jobs. And this match helps to improve efficiency and reduce lost time.

But many employees, especially those with infrequent contact with doctors and nurses, were suspicious and fearful. The following comment from a worker at the Norton Company reflected the views of many workers:

> I also had to undergo a Doctor's examination. To judge after the thoroughness they must expect all their employees here to be ready to take Kaiser Wilhelm's job after he has worried himself to death. I never saw anything like it. It takes about two hours and two doctors. First they measure you, then they start to hammer all over and you are stripped of every stretch (sic) of clothing. Then a most severe eye test and so on and still further. Those two doctors was more fit to be Veterinarians than human doctors so thorough they are. Well I got over everything, only I got orders to come and have my teeth fixed. So that is all over with.[2]

The issue of physical examinations for employees was brought to a head in the spring of 1917, when such examinations were proposed as a war measure to reduce absenteeism and to increase production. Dr. Geier and Dr. Harry Mock of Sears and Roebuck asked the house of delegates of the American Medical Association (AMA) to request a meeting of governmental medical services to discuss the problem. The AMA house of delegates quickly assented and passed a resolution endorsing physical examinations.

Drs. Geier and Mock then prodded slow-moving bureaucrats into action and the development of a formal program on physicals was undertaken. Then the idea needed to be sold, at a general meeting, to the heads of the federal medical services, employers and labor representatives. American Federation of Labor President Samuel Gompers and William Green were present.

The mere mention of the topic of physical examinations in industry brought William Green to his feet to attack the proposal, which was the core of the program seeking to promote healthier and more productive manpower. Green stated that proponents of the plan were bent on "producing a human scrap heap" on which men would be discarded as a result of examinations. Gompers, Dr. Geier would note, "said not a word—just listened."

Dr. Geier's response to Green's remarks was persuasive. He said, "As for that human scrap heap, you already have it, and you are adding to it daily." Placing workers into jobs for which they were not fit was a common occurrence. Unions were not doing a thing about the problem. In fact, they ignored it. Hence, there were no attempts to properly place the handicapped or to rehabilitate them to greater efficiency. Dr. Geier concluded his response to Green by saying, "We are trying to repair these men and fit them into productive jobs."

The battle for an examination program was not won that day, but a better understanding of its objectives developed with each succeeding conference. And among the converts was the powerful Samuel Gompers.

Dr. Geier and Samuel Gompers would find a common cause from time to time and would collaborate in efforts to achieve mutual objectives. In the early summer of 1917, the

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[2] Quoted in Charles W. Cheape, *Family Firm to Modern Multinational* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA., and London, 1985) p. 133.

U.S. Surgeon General Rupert Blue had been unable to persuade Congress to expedite an appropriation related to the federal government's work in industry. The prospect for early action was not bright. Dr. Geier suggested soliciting Samuel Gompers for assistance. The surgeon general had never met Gompers, but Dr. Geier phoned Gompers, who invited the two doctors to visit him at his country home the next morning, 4 July 1917.

The holiday meeting went well. After introductions were made, the three men entered into a long discussion of patriotic music and poetry. They talked about everything except the grim business of war. But the mission would prove to be successful. "What a strange beginning," wrote Geier, "for a long-standing friendship between these two men! Of course Congress, thereafter, with Gompers' blessing supplied Blue with money."

If pre-employment physicals were regarded as essential for the intelligent matching of worker with job, what was sometimes called an "all-day dispensary" was the next step in conserving health. These all-day facilities would today be described as fully equipped. They were a far cry from what The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company had provided at its old Spring Grove Avenue shop. Of that operation Edward Pandorf, a 50-year veteran, would later write, "When we were in the old plant on Spring Grove Avenue, the necessary 'doctoring' was carried on in the Shipping Department. The clerk there took care of simple cuts and bruises, as well as minor eye care."

The all-day dispensary, Dr. Geier noted in a 1917 address, would at first be used by workers with slight cuts or suffering from other accidents. But soon the men would confide to the doctor some surgical defect from which they were suffering. The doctor would also be their "confessor, adviser and priest."

It was, to use a modern term, the holistic medicine approach that had the greatest recuperative promise. A worker might be taking headache remedies but, actually, be suffering from eye strain. Or, a worker might have been treated for rheumatism but really was afflicted with broken arches.

Dr. Geier was also a practitioner of preventive medicine. A study of the great flu epidemic of 1918 offers proof of the effectiveness of Dr. Geier's preventive measures. He ordered his nurses to stand at each shop entrance in order to take the temperature of each arriving employee. Anyone with the slightest fever was sent home. Preventive medicine worked. Absenteeism throughout the city exceeded 30 percent; it never went over 7.5 percent at the Mill.

The Mill's dispensary had a dental clinic as an adjunct and Dr. Geier could relate numerous instances in which poor dental hygiene was the cause of poor health. The following case is illustrative:

> I am thinking just now of such a man who had been treated for rheumatism for years and who never was able to get out of the subnormal class of workers. A careful checking up showed pyorrhea of the teeth to be responsible. With six month's supervision and care, that man increased his earning capacity by nearly 100 percent.[3]

Dr. Geier's advocacy and promotion of industrial medicine was not limited to The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company. During 1916 he was in the forefront of efforts leading to the establishment of the American Association of Industrial Physicians and Surgeons. He

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[3] Dr. Otto P. Geier, "The Human Potential in Industry," Paper presented at the spring meeting, Cincinnati, OH, of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, 21-24 May 1917, pp. 9-10.

would serve as the organization's secretary and president. For a time he was also a member of the Ohio State Medical Council.

In October 1917, Dr. Geier delivered a paper before the American College of Surgeons. The paper was requested by Dr. Will Mayo of the famed clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. Dr. Geier's paper was titled, "The Physician and Surgeon in the Industrial Crisis." It painted a detailed picture of 1917 labor conditions and their relationship to industry health services. The address, described afterward by Dr. Mayo as "a good paper," won new friends to Dr. Geier's cause. The American College of Surgeon's Board on Industrial and Traumatic Surgery was established in 1926. The board developed minimum standards that were subsequently adopted in a thousand medical departments.

MUTUAL AID

Physicals and preventive health measures can result in a decrease in the rate of illness. Yet death and disabling illnesses are certainties. A new organization was needed to provide benefits to employees and to their families in times of illness, accidents or death.

On 21 April 1916 an organizational meeting of the Employees' Health and Insurance Association was held. Later known simply as "Mutual Aid," this company-sponsored group was governed by The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's Employees' service committee, which reported to Dr. Geier. The employees, through Mutual Aid, organized to provide for themselves and their families a definite income in case of illness or death. It was self-supporting until the flu epidemic of 1919 hit. At that time more money was going out in benefits than was coming in as dues. It was necessary for the Mill to fund financial assistance to assure solvency and continued operations.

A *Milling Review* article in March 1936, stated that, "Since the beginning, i.e., (Mutual Aid) has paid out close to $150,000 to employees for sickness and accident benefits, while approximately the same sum was expended by the company in Life Insurance benefits."[4] Interestingly enough the Mill's dentist (the Dental Department was started in 1916) was paid by Mutual Aid, while The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company furnished supplies and equipment.

Mutual Aid diminished in importance in later years as new company benefits and various insurance programs provided what Mutual Aid had once supplied. In recent decades Mutual Aid derived its funds from vending machine profits and these funds were spent on such items as funeral floral arrangements. Mutual Aid was formally abandoned by Cincinnati Milacron on 15 April 1988.

EMPLOYEES' SERVICE COMMITTEE

Dr. Geier said, "The industrial physician can exhibit, without embarrassment to himself or his company, more interest in a wider field of human activity than any other physician, or any layman." The challenge of working side by side and in contact with thousands of employees was one Dr. Geier enjoyed during his 28-year Mill career. There were always new fields to explore and study. The company house organ, *The Milling Review*, reported in its coverage of Dr. Geier's career that "safety, plant cafeteria services, recreation, parking, locker rooms, consultation on personal problems of employees, retirement and disability plans,

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[4] "A Story of Fair Play," *The Milling Review, March, 1936, No pages listed.*

company sponsorship of scouting, keeping employees informed and community campaigns were projects that interested Dr. Geier."

The employee services committee consisted of representatives elected by secret ballot from the various shop departments. The first election was held in 1921 and for many years 13 employee representatives met with five representatives of management. The Geier brothers were determined that the committee should act as a cooperative body and that it should not be portrayed as a captive organization that was patronized by management.

In 1917 Dr. Geier wrote about management's social obligations to labor:

> It was about this same period that many abortive attempts at so-called welfare work were started, which in most instances failed to make any real contribution to the better understanding of labor and capital.
>
> This sort of welfare work was established on purely paternalistic lines, was imposed upon the group of workers without their desire or consent, and all too frequently furnished that for which they had no real need. This type of welfare contributed to the social and superficial requirements of the man, and overlooked the fundamentals. It did not take into account the basic principle that the workman is very human, and to get the best results from any socializing effort you must first engage his cooperation....
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> Welfare work of the former kind deserved failure and it did fail. It was "built upon sands" and was all too frequently washed away by the least wave of discontent among the workers. After the first strike, the returning man found the doors of the dining rooms, libraries and club rooms closed upon him. The whole structure was weak and crumbled at the mere sign of a storm. Is it any wonder, then, that welfare work came into such disrepute with the workers and was so continuously and effectively used by the labor agitator?[5]

Dr. Geier's remarks were not made in hindsight during President Roosevelt's New Deal, when welfare capitalism was generally abandoned in the face of successful union organization campaigns throughout the land. It was true that certain welfare experiments were ill-advised and widely recognized as such. Chief among these were the sociology department, established by Henry Ford, to teach employees the virtues of thrift and to observe their personal habits. Such efforts would ultimately fail.

Dr. Geier probably had a local employer in mind when he castigated a company, employing 1,100 workers, that contributed $100 annually, less than nine cents a man, to their mutual aid organization. Dr. Geier ridiculed the stingy and false economies of the company's management. "It is not surprising to note in passing that the labor turnover in this plant is 305 per month. This man who gives the whole sum of $100 toward the sole cooperative effort on the part of the men to care for themselves in times of illness loses $100,000 per year in excessive labor turnover."[6]

Probably the brightest moment in the history of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's employees service committee occurred during the Mill's worst Great Depression days in 1931-1932. Average employment in 1932 was 800 persons, a little more than one-third of the 1929 tally. The Committee, spurred by a vote of the members at a mass meeting,

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[5] Geier, "Human Potential," 7.

[6] Ibid., 11.

maintained complete benefits against illness and accidents for all those who were laid off. It paid rent, coal, water and gas bills. A half-century afterward, old-timers still recalled how the committee bought potatoes, cabbages and other staples in boxcar lots and distributed free food and clothing to the families of laid off employees.

CAFETERIA AND COMMISSARY

In the years before World War I, there were no cafeterias, dining rooms, sandwich counters or vending machines dispensing food at the Mill. In those early decades the men brought their meals in lunch pails. And the tool-room boys, co-ops or another "lowest man" in the department would take a notched pole to one of the many saloons in Oakley. Up to 15 beer buckets were filled and put on a notched pole at the neighborhood taverns and taken back to the shop. Prohibition brought an end to the practice of sending out for beer.

The Mill's cafeteria staff taken during World War I. Notice the sign calling for 'meatless and wheatless' meals.

Changing practices were underway even before Prohibition. During 1915 the first sandwich, milk and coffee counter was opened at the Mill. The sandwich stand resulted from a suggestion of Dr. Geier and was conducted as an experiment to see if there was a real need for a place to eat at the plant.[7]

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[7] Graham Taylor was one who felt that there was a need for factory lunchrooms at the plants in Norwood and Oakley. He wrote, "Comparatively few operatives live near enough to go home for lunch. The facilities in the vicinity of the plants are poor. Some of the plants have established lunchrooms. A plant which conducts an unusually good one reports that it does so at a considerable annual loss. Some do not sell food but merely provide a place where lunches which are brought may be eaten, while others make provision only for the office force. But in most cases a work bench, a curbstone, a doorstep or the nearest grassy spot must accommodate those who eat at work, while several cheap and not very clean looking saloons and 'eating joints' serve crowds of others." See Graham Taylor, *Satellite Cities,* p. 102.

The stand was managed and operated by the employees' service committee and daily receipts averaged $30. The stand was not elegant. There were no dishes and each customer carried his own tin bucket, presumably one previously used for another libation, for soup or coffee. Customers cleaned their own utensils. The early menu was limited to sandwiches (hot dogs, ham and cheese), pie, soup, coffee and milk. Pricing was simple, as each item was four cents except for buttermilk, which was two cents.

The experiment was a success and in the following years a well equipped kitchen and a 600-seat cafeteria were opened in the old office building of the Mill. Along with the new facilities came an expanded menu. Meat, potatoes and pie were standard fare, as Dr. Geier believed that hard working machinists required ample quantities of protein. That early dining area was also a scene of relaxation. During World War I The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's brass band played daily at noon. Here, too, movies were shown and some of the Mill's Christmas parties were held.

Another food-related undertaking begun circa 1916 was the Mill's commissary. Its purpose was to provide employees with a place to buy groceries at competitive prices. The commissary was said to have been established because of employee interest and proved to be a convenient undertaking. Employees could drop off their shopping lists in the morning and find items bagged by quitting time.

The commissary lasted into the 1920s. By then its inventory had expanded beyond foodstuffs and canning supplies to automotive supplies and tire and tube repairs, The commissary also sold workers' clothing and featured "FAMOUS GUARANTEED NOT TO RIP CROWN OVERALLS." The closing of the commissary might have been a cost-saving measure during the sharp economic depression of 1921. It is also known that area retailers objected to its operation.

SANITATION AND SAFETY

The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was not alone among American companies in promoting sanitation and safety. But with a physician overseeing employee services, these concerns were stressed continuously. The first issue of the *Employees' Services News* carried articles titled "Why it is necessary to have all wounds treated immediately," "Stop Running in the Aisles," and "2 Late 2 See After You Are Blinded (the value of goggles and safety methods)."

The Mill's emphasis predated Dr. Geier's employment with the company. In 1911 The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was awarded a commemorative medal by the International Exposition of Hygiene at Dresden, Germany. The award was for the company's exhibit in accident prevention, industrial hygiene and mutuality. The *Cincinnati Enquirer's* account of the medal quoted the letter accompanying the award notification:

> Furthermore, we wish to advise you of an additional honor for your exhibit, in that it now forms a part of the permanent collection in the great Berlin Museum of Safety. This is particularly gratifying to the American Museum of Safety, inasmuch as it is the first time that any non-German exhibit has been installed at the Berlin Museum.

It was not only the Germans who were impressed by the Mill's efforts for safe working conditions. During 1926 in London The Daily Mail sponsored a mission of eight trade unionists to investigate and report on working conditions in the United States. The delegation was received by dignitaries in its 12-city tour, including President Calvin Coolidge and American Federation of Labor President William Green.

The morning of 7 April 1926 the delegation visited The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, where Philip O. Geier, then the company vice president, acted as guide. The delegation was impressed with the "evidence of the close and friendly relations between the employees and the men." They were also struck by what appeared, to these visitors, to be almost "excessive efforts" to ensure the safety of the workmen. All of the Mill's shops, they noted, had safety committees, safety devices were present in the shop, and safety literature and posters were visible in the plant and copies were available to take home. The posters stressed the consequences to one's family of accident or death resulting from carelessness.[8]

Of the Mill's safety efforts, Philip O. Geier said, "The company's turnover (production) increased as soon as we began to look after the health and safety of our employees." A little more than two years after Fred Geier's death, Dr. Ferdinand Porsche came to visit the company. Like the earlier English trade union mission, Porsche's objective was to determine the secret of American productivity with its resultant high standard of living. In his report on the visit the German builder of Volkswagens and Porsches also praised the Mill's cleanliness saying, "In the workshops we were impressed by the degree of cleanliness, similar to Ford. Here too there is neon light everywhere. Pathways between the machines are indicated by white lines on the floor."[9]

LOANS AND THRIFT

In the years before Social Security in the United States, a worker was expected to provide for his own retirement. A formal retirement plan at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company did not appear until late 1941. In sickness, retirement and death, what the worker set aside for his family largely determined the family's standard of living as well as its legacy. Thus, the Geiers' values regarding saving and thrift were ones that they also tried to promote among their employees. The Mill's leaders had, of course, the financial resources to cover misfortune. This was often not the case with American workers.

The Employees Health and Insurance Association (Mutual Aid) provided for sickness and accident insurance. And the company urged all employees to enroll in this insurance plan. While the Mutual Aid Association was managed by employees, it was guaranteed by the company. In a normal year the Mill's burden would be rather slight, but there were exceptions such as during the nationwide flue epidemic in the fall of 1918.

Most employees who could pass a physical examination and were not over 45 could elect one of the three classes of Mutual Aid benefits:

Class A:	Dues, 50 cents a month; benefits, $1.00 a day
Class B:	Dues, 25 cents a month; benefits, 50 cents a day
Class AB:	Dues, 75 cents a month; benefits, 75 cents a day

Employees over age 45 were limited to Class B. The Mill, separately from Mutual Aid, provided at its expense a life insurance benefit for all Mutual Aid members. When the plan was instituted in 1916, industrial benefits ranged from $50 to $500 and were determined by years of service. While it may have been hoped that Mutual Aid would be self-supporting through the collection of dues, that desired result was not always the case. One of the red ink

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[8] *The Daily Mail* Trade Union Mission to United States, 7 April 1926, p. 59.

[9] Extracted from an address by G. E. J. Kaes on 29 January 1937, "Dr. Ferdinand Porsche's journey to North America in 1936."

years was the depression year of 1920. On 1 January 1921 the Mutual Aid books showed a deficit of $252.16, whereas the previous year's closing statement displayed a surplus of $1,300.

Promoting better ways for employees to cope with the financial costs of illness, accidents and death was not the full extent of management's message urging financial responsibility. An editorial page in the 4 July 1920 *Employees' Service News* extolled "earning and saving."

During the first half of 1920 economic conditions appeared satisfactory at the Mill. Orders and shipments were strong and employment topped 1,000, a figure close to that of the Mill's workforce at the end of World War I. But the Geier brothers were not deceived into thinking that the post-war period would be rosy. The following editorial reflected their beliefs:

> It is our earnest advice to every reader of this little magazine that he **earn** and **save** now as never before. No one knows what the future holds in store for us. There are those who say that we are going to have a panic [depression]. We do not believe it, but we do know that regardless of what comes, the best possible preparation is to **earn** and **save**.
>
> Work faithfully every day, buy only the things you actually need. Look over the old suit, it will probably do another year. And you do not need an automobile. A dollar used to purchase anything now is only worth about 53 cents, measured in terms of 1914 purchasing power. Put your dollars away in the bank for a year or two until they are worth more nearly their old value.[10]

While the Geier brothers may not have predicted a depression, they were certainly on target in urging employees to take measures to prepare for one. Business dried up in the second half of 1920. And company profit plummeted from approximately $1 million in 1919 to about $3,000 in 1920.

When Fred A. Geier spoke to The Cincinnati Milling Machine workers on 30 March 1921 it was clear that the nation and the company were in a severe depression. What Geier told the workers about economic conditions was now apparent to all. The majority of machine tool factories throughout the nations were shut down and the "Big Chief" forecast the demise of some before the year was over. And while machine tool builders were closed, not a single Mill customer was running full time.

From a purely financial viewpoint the Mill might have been better off closing its doors. But that was not the way Fred A. Geier had operated in the past, most notably during the Panic of 1893, and it would not be his way in 1921. However, Geier urged austerity measures. Employees were asked and agreed to take a 15 percent cut in wages. Management took salary reductions and Mill's directors omitted three quarterly dividends during 1921. Even with these measures, employment fell 75 percent, from an average of 1,004 in 1920 to only 250 in 1921. Another casualty of the depression appears to have been the *Employees' Service News*, which last appeared regularly with the December 1920-January 1921 issue.

The Mill's employees were, of course, free to heed or ignore Fred Geier's admonitions to save for a rainy day. The wise ones did. The "Big Chief" took the initiative in promoting employee savings, as is illustrated by his Christmas gift and message to workers in 1916. The message read in part:

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[10] "The Lost Words," *Employees' Service News*, 4 July 1920, p. 16.

> For several years past it has been our custom as an expression of the Christmas spirit, to make a deposit in the Oakley Bank to the account of each employee, in the account of each employee, in the amount of One Dollar for each year of continuous service with this Company, up to ten years.
>
> This year has been an unusually prosperous one, both for you as shown by your increased earnings, and for the Company. We are glad, therefore, to add to our usual Christmas Gift and have deposited Three Dollars for each year of continuous service.

Rather than presenting the employees with a check or cash, the Company opened savings accounts in the employees' names at the Oakley Bank or added to existing accounts. The Christmas gift reflected Fred Geier's belief that success in life resulted from striving and saving. Striving meant sticking to one's job and not job-hopping. And saving was easiest when wages were good and work was steady as was the case in the 1916 boom economy. The Oakley Bank confirmed that at least some of the Mill's employees concurred, as there was nearly $25,000 in the workers' savings accounts that had been opened in the previous two Christmas seasons.

When the thrifty Mill employee did not have the savings for a necessary expense, Fred Geier was instrumental in seeing that Cincinnati had a financial institution dedicated to arranging installment loans to factory workers. That story, the account of his labors on behalf of the Morris Plan Bank of Cincinnati, is told in chapter nine.

RECREATION

A review of the Mill's employee services, or its corporate welfare program, reveals strong initiatives in such areas as health, savings and education. The mutual employer-employee benefits were evident. As Dr. Otto Geier often remarked, "Take care of an employee's health and he'll take care of your production." The advantage of an educated, intelligent work force is only too obvious in one of the manufacturing industries most dependent on skilled workers.

The Mill's promotion of various recreational activities has less obvious advantages, yet, this constitutes a core component in the concept of corporate welfare. While The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company supported a variety of recreational activities, it also urged selectivity. The worker whose free time was dedicated to drinking at a saloon or in viewing motion pictures was not looked upon with favor by management.

What was encouraged was athletics, specifically team sports and outings. Athletics promote fitness, but they can also contribute to leadership and in building a team spirit. A company baseball team allowed foremen, managers and workers to get to know each other outside of the shop and to work on a common cause. While the immediate objective might be a winning season, the long-term goal was management-worker cooperation. The mingling of management and veteran workers with new hirees was also thought to have the beneficial effect of providing a steadying influence on newcomers.

By 1919 Mill sponsored athletics included baseball, quoits, horseshoes and a track and field meet with the other plants in and near the Oakley factory colony. The Mill's first tennis courts were completed during the summer of 1911. There were quieter pursuits for the less vigorously inclined. The checker club brought together 40 shop and office men for daily games and weekly tournaments. And some 40 to 50 employees cultivated thrift gardens in back of the foundry.

What had begun as Victory Gardens to alleviate food shortages during World War I were being continued both as an economy measure and as a means for more employees to meet and to get to know each other. The Mill's practice of furnishing garden plots died out during the 1920s. The practice was revived at the beginning of the Great Depression and continued for, at least, most of the 1930s. Large 50- by-100-foot plowed and harrowed plots were made available for employee planting and cultivation. Those employees with big families might be permitted to tend two plots.

The Mill's baseball team taken at a Fred A. Geier birthday party at the Cincinnati Zoo. Note the Elephant House in the background. A capless Walter Tangeman appears in the back row, second from right.

More sedentary activities were encouraged with the establishment of a branch of the Hamilton County library in the medical department. The *Employees' Service News* reported that it was well stocked with works of fiction as well as technical volumes.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Of all the Mill's many activities, probably none was enjoyed more than birthday parties (they would later be known as company outings or picnics) and the yearly Christmas celebrations. The birthday parties occurred on or near the date of Fred A. Geier's birth and were the occasion for an elaborate outing for the Mill's employees and their families. There were few, if any, activities that fostered greater employee identification with and loyalty to The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company.

There had been yearly outings of the Mill's workers with other employees in the Cincinnati metal trades shops since at least the early years of the twentieth century. Many of these were at Chester Park, a picnic and amusement area located in the Mill Creek Valley. These jaunts featured contests, rides and prizes.

By 1916 The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company had decided to hold its own outing. These early forerunners of the Company's Family Day were held at the Cincinnati Zoo. There were reasons why the zoo was selected as the early site. It was a favorite Cincinnati locality. Philip O. Geier and other Mill executives frequently took visitors to the zoo after they had concluded their business affairs.

The zoo was more than a zoological and botanical garden. With ice shows, band concerts and operas it offered a variety of amusements. Holding the early Mill outings at the zoo helped ensure the survival of what is now one of the Queen City's proudest assets. The continued operation of the zoo was questionable prior to 1916. Then, Mrs. Mary Emery and Mrs. Charles Phelps Taft each donated $125,000 to purchase the zoo from the Traction Company. Because of persistent operating deficits, the Traction Company had proposed disposing of the animals and subdividing and developing the grounds.

The two patronesses also agreed to cover operating deficits through 1921. If at that time the zoo was not operating in the black, the property was to be sold and the proceeds contributed to the Cincinnati Art Museum's endowment fund.

The Geier brothers' decision to hold the Mill's outing at the zoo was partly designed to save a Cincinnati institution. The zoo's spacious grounds and facilities enabled it to accommodate the numerous special events planned during these birthday celebrations. The number of those attending these outings, in excess of 5,000 employees along with their families, undoubtedly familiarized many area residents with the zoo's attractions.

To celebrate his birthday in 1919, Fred A. Geier invited all employees to a picnic at the Cincinnati Zoo. The band, composed of Mill employees, was organized in 1916, and often played at work during the lunch hour.

Fred Geier's birthday parties at the zoo typically included a full day of athletic contests, races and games. A parade, preceded by the four Geier brothers and the Mill band, led participants and spectators to the athletic fields. Also in the parade were elephants, camels and boys riding ponies and donkeys.

Prizes were given for the best waltzers and fox-trotters, the fastest watermelon eaters and the swiftest greased pig catchers. There were tug-of-war contests between the Mill's Army and Navy veterans. The foundry men tested their strength against a 100-year-old elephant. The University of Cincinnati co-ops challenged the shop's baseball team to a game of pushball. There were an ice show and fireworks and, naturally, lots of free food.

What was unquestionably the most unique feature of Fred A. Geier's birthday party was the "Better Babies Contest." The winners were not selected on the basis of beauty; they were chosen on the basis of health and strength, which were determined through physical examinations. Dr. Geier, the champion of examinations for workers, felt that too little serious attention was given to children's health. He was particularly concerned with the health of pre-school age children.

The Better Babies Contests were a feature of the Mill's birthday party celebrations at the Cincinnati Zoo. While prizes were given for the chubbiest babies, the occasion was also an opportunity for physical examinations, a pioneering example of health care for dependents.

These examinations were fairly thorough, given the examination site. And they did alert parents to health problems. Of 38 babies examined in 1919, 50 percent were said to be underweight, 29 percent had enlarged or diseased tonsils, and 18.5 percent had adenoids. While The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was not the first American industrial enterprise to offer medical benefits, it is likely that it led the way in providing for family health benefits when it initiated children's examinations at the Better Babies Contests.

CHRISTMAS AT THE MILL

Christmas celebrations on the scale of the Mill's were the exception in American industry. It is said that the first Mill Christmas occurred in 1887, the year Fred A. Geier began his career in industry. The Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company was then located at Second and Plum Streets in the Cincinnati Basin. Each of the employees (there were only about 25 men and boys) received a turkey and a basket of fruit.

It was not until 1915 that many of the Mill's Christmas traditions began. It is written that Santa Claus made his first Mill appearance then and it is considered likely that Santa was the "Big Chief" himself. It was also around this time that The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company started a savings account for each employee. The amount credited to each account was based on years of service.

In 1915 a German brass band, numbering 15 men, was organized by Charles Hohe and Harry Ashmore to play at the Christmas party. It was said that the assembling of the band was undertaken as an alternative to the usual outside musical entertainment. After The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company moved to Oakley, management arranged with the YMCA for Christmas entertainment. This usually consisted of bringing in a portable organ, musicians and readers of Christmas messages and stories. One photo in the company archives shows two rather austere women, dressed in the fashion of the Salvation Army, posed with the organ and a cornet.

Some of the shop's old-timers had grown tired of the "same old tunes" and organized to provide a more spirited, and perhaps less spiritual, musical offering. Fred A. Geier liked what he heard and asked Charles Hohe to organize the group as a shop band. According to Hohe, it later became one of the best industrial bands in the state.

The assembling of the employees and the exchange of holiday greetings were features of every Christmas at the Mill. There was always music and the singing of carols. There were gifts when times were good. In the first decades these presents were likely to be cigars, candy or a Christmas food or fruit basket. Contributions to workers' savings accounts began during the World War I era. In the Roaring Twenties employees generally received a Christmas card that contained a check based on the number of years of service.

Gift giving was not a one-way proposition. The statue of *La Metallurgie*, which represents the craftsman and his art, was a gift from the Mill's employees to the "Big Chief" in 1915. It is recorded that Fred A. Geier was nearly swept off his feet when the gift, which had been wrapped in an American flag, was unveiled.

The statue was exhibited in Fred A. Geier's office during his life and also was incorporated in the design of the Mill's service pins. Service pins were first awarded at the Christmas party in 1916. The company sought employees who planned to make the Mill their lifetime work. That this objective was achieved is illustrated by the percentage of workers who stayed with the Mill more than five years, the minimum time necessary to qualify for a service pin. A *Milling Review* article in the mid 1930s noted that over 50 percent of the payroll, approximately 1,000 workers, had earned service pins.

In 1925, the employees gave another significant Christmas gift to the "Big Chief": one of the first milling machines built by the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company. It had been discovered in an area metal-working shop and was purchased through employee contributions.

The gifts were not always so substantial or serious. There were often gag gifts that were intended to poke fun at management and shop personalities. In that class of gift was the sunflower that was given to Philip O. Geier at the 1936 Christmas party. The sunflower was a symbol of Republican presidential candidate Alfred Landon who came from the Sunflower

State of Kansas. Philip Geier was active in GOP politics and had been a delegate to the 1936 Republican national convention.

Management initiated some of the surprises that took place at the Christmas parties. At the 1928 Christmas party the workforce assembled at the new Number 2 Centerless Grinder Building. Fred Geier staged a grand entrance down the main aisle of this high-bay building. He stood on the bed of a lift truck and was dressed as a snowman. He was outfitted with a stove pipe hat and held a broom. His make-up included black coal spots for his eyes, mouth and nose. A barrel of confetti had been suspended in the rafters to create a snow storm when the snowman came up the aisle. Unfortunately there was a technical failure that day: the air hose did not blow. So the Mill did not experience a white Christmas that year, at least not inside the shop.

The Christmas parties were an occasion of good will, but they also served as a time for management communications. After the greetings, gifts, gags and songs, Fred Geier would climb upon a workbench and speak about business conditions in the coming year. Especially good news was often announced at the Christmas parties. But the "Big Chief" never neglected to stress the importance of good workmanship and the necessity of lowering costs.

When the Mill's first cafeteria was built during World War I, the Christmas party was moved from the shop to the dining area. Fred Geier would climb on top of a table to speak and to be seen. The dining hall was decorated with Christmas trees and the biggest one would later be sent to the Children's Home. Frequently the orphans took part in The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's celebration. On occasion the home's orchestra accompanied the carol singing.

Christmas, 1929. This employee get-together was held in the newly expanded Plant 2 before equipment was installed.

There were many Christmas celebrations at the Mill and each one added to the memories. The more extravagant events occurred in boom years. But as Frederick V. Geier

reminisced in 1947, "Some years, when there were no checks and times were hard, the singing and the Christmas spirit seemed at its best."[11]

THE CINCINNATI MODEL HOMES COMPANY HOUSING FOR WORKERS

After work most Mill employees returned to their homes and families. The move to Oakley, at the time a sparsely populated suburb, meant that most World War I era workers faced a trip on the "factory special" train or on a streetcar in order to commute back to the inner city or to the older neighborhoods along the Mill Creek Valley. The commute linked two disparate worlds: the work world, a modern and sanitary industrial plant at a suburban site, to the congested tenements of Over-the-Rhine. Fred Geier's brother, Philip, had purchased land on which workers' housing would be built before any announcement of the factory colony was made. His purpose was to acquire property before real-estate speculators drove up prices.

Whatever land Philip O. Geier acquired would only be a drop in the bucket. Much more housing would be needed in the vicinity of the new factories being built in Norwood and Oakley. But the agents of the first major housing development in Oakley, the Oakley Park Company, were not concerned with building houses for workers. The Oakley Park Company had purchased the land where the old Oakley race track stood. In a three-year period before World War I, it had constructed 150 houses, but less than ten were bought by employees of the Oakley plants. Professor Graham Taylor, one of the founders of the American Economic Association, wrote, "The [Oakley Park Company] agent frankly stated that he made no effort to interest factory employees since their wages were too low to permit them to occupy houses of the type built."

Thus, middle income Cincinnatians bought houses practically outside the factory colony gates and rode the factory special to work at downtown offices. Another disturbing fact about Cincinnati was that it had the greatest proportion of tenement dwellers of any midwestern city. Before World War I, fully 44 percent of all families in Cincinnati were living in houses for three or more families. This contrasted with figures of four percent in Toledo, six percent in Indianapolis, seven percent in Columbus, eight percent in Cleveland, 13 percent in Louisville, and 24 percent in Buffalo.

The Geier brothers were aware of Cincinnati's housing problems and how the movement of industry to Oakley had added new dimensions to the situation. Philip O. Geier had worked to buy land in Oakley that would be sold for workers' housing. Dr. Otto P. Geier had received some unwelcome publicity a few years previously when he presided over the torching of Cincinnati's Shanty Town in the West End, while he was in Mayor Hunt's cabinet. And attorney Alfred Bettman, the son of an incorporator of the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company, had organized the Better Housing League, which promoted a city-wide program to upgrade sanitary conditions.

Programs to improve and upgrade tenement conditions were really band-aid solutions for the problem of providing for workers' housing in the Queen City. The most novel and successful experiment in housing reform and community development was that of the Model Homes Company. It was through the efforts of Jacob G. Schmidlapp, the son of a poor German immigrant who had settled in Piqua, Ohio, that the housing needs of factory workers were tackled.

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[11] Frederick V. Geier, "Christmas at the Mill," *This Week at the Mill,* 24 December 1947.

Schmidlapp had achieved great success in cigar and distilling enterprises and became prominent in Cincinnati's banking and philanthropic circles. But tragedy had also struck the Schmidlapp family, as his wife and a daughter, Emma, were killed in a railroad accident in the West and a second daughter, Charlotte Rose, died in an automobile accident in France. These losses may have spurred Schmidlapp to devote his financial resources to help alleviate the conditions of the needy. Like Fred Geier, Jacob Schmidlapp turned private tragedies into benevolent activities.

Between 1911 and 1914 Schmidlapp built 96 apartments in the residential neighborhoods of Avondale, Walnut Hills, Oakley, Hyde Park and Norwood. In common with other housing reformers, Schmidlapp believed adequate living space and clean conditions created a good community environment.

Where Schmidlapp differed from many at the time was in his belief that such housing should not be limited to whites. Indeed, the majority of his houses and apartment units were established for blacks. Schmidlapp may have gained empathy for blacks during the six years he worked in Memphis after the Civil War. In Cincinnati he became a trustee of the McCall Colored School. Schmidlapp's efforts on behalf of blacks undoubtedly complicated his efforts to construct houses in some suburban communities, even when the proposed units were designated for whites.

By 1914 Schmidlapp gathered a small group of investors to form and to incorporate the Cincinnati Model Homes Company. A subscription of $500,000 was successfully undertaken and limited dividends (five to six percent) were anticipated. The articles of incorporation listed the company's purpose as "building or acquiring houses, acquiring the necessary real estate therefore, maintaining renting, leasing, or selling the same, and for doing all things incidental thereto."

Schmidlapp did not envision that all of his tenants would remain lifelong renters. One of the most distinctive features of the Model Homes Company was its method of selling a two-family house to a wage earner. It was Schmidlapp's desire that the worker, by renting half of the house, could buy a two-family house when purchasing a single family residence was financially impossible.

Another method to foster home ownership was through a "rent to own" plan. A worker, after an initial $100 deposit, would receive a deed to the house after paying ten years' rent.

The first units the Model Homes Company constructed in 1915 were rented for $2.50 a week. Schmidlapp believed that a wage earner should be able to live in a comfortable house for not more "than one day's pay for one week's rent." Of Schmidlapp's homes for workers in Norwood and Oakley, Professor Taylor wrote, "These provide sanitary dwellings at a rent considerably lower than that prevailing in either suburb." All apartments had bathrooms and outside porches, even the second story units.

Fred Geier and Jacob Schmidlapp were active in many of the same clubs: the Business Men's Club, the Commercial Club and the Queen City Club. Yet Fred Geier's official involvement in the area of housing reform did not occur until January 1919, when he was elected to the board of directors of the Model Homes Association. That Fred Geier had been previously involved in housing matters is indicated in the letter informing the Mill's chief of his election to the board. The Model Home's secretary concluded his notification letter stating:

> I presume you will be glad to hear that the recently constructed twenty-four flats on Carpenter and Follette Ave. [renamed Alamo and Browning in

1918] are rented. I am preparing a brief survey of the tenancy of said groups and will mail it to you in a few days.

On 18 December 1919 Jacob Schmidlapp died unexpectedly in New York City. The Model Homes Company survived his demise for more than a half-century and was dissolved only in the late 1970s.

Fred Geier and, after his death, his brother Walter, were intimately involved in the Model Homes Company's direction for two decades. Naturally, a major focus of the Geier brothers was securing satisfactory housing for factory workers living in Oakley. But Fred Geier and Otto Geier were familiar with the Model Homes housing for blacks elsewhere in the Cincinnati area. In 1923 Fred Geier's chauffeur, Mr. Jackson, rented a three-room flat at the Chapel and Park Streets development. On at least one occasion the Mill chief was asked by the Washington Terrace Tenants Association to address them. Washington Terrace was the largest of the Model Homes black housing developments. It was reported that Fred Geier had been well received by the residents.

During the fall of 1926 housing flats on Ibsen and Marburg Avenues were completed. The land had been previously owned by a Mill subsidiary and Cincinnati Milling Machine Company received a preference when units were rented. Over the years there had been some criticism that the buildings were too uniform or monotonous. Changes in design and floor plans had taken place over the years. Dr. Geier was personally invited to visit these apartments as he had "been responsible in incorporating the silver-gray stain in some parts of the interior woodwork finish." The Geier brothers were unlikely to be accused of failing to pay attention to detail.

Those in the rental business know that there are always headaches. And during the hard times of the Great Depression the problems appeared overwhelming. On 12 February 1932, Dr. Geier wrote a letter to Harris Ginberg, secretary of The Model Homes. Dr. Geier implored the administrators not to evict a laid-off Mill employee who lived in a unit with his wife and two small children. Even though the tenant was six months in arrears, Dr. Geier wrote Secretary Ginberg that his brother, Fred, would be greatly embarrassed by such an eviction.

Dr. Geier related that the Mill's Mutual Aid Association was meeting the ex-employee's food and clothing needs, but that there were no Cincinnati Milling Machine Company funds available for rent. Ginberg, in his reply, differed with Dr. Geier's analysis of the situation but he did permit the delinquent to remain as a tenant. This exception to policy was made because it was requested by members of the Geier family. Secretary Ginberg concluded his response to Dr. Geier by writing, "They shall not be deprived of shelter, because of the motives that prompted Jacob G. Schmidlapp to enter the housing field and because your brother, Fred A., is one of the few who have helped these motives to take concrete form."

The minutes of the Model Homes Company disclose that Fred Geier took an active interest in the affairs of the company. At times he was a minority of one in decisions of the five-man board. Nevertheless, his role grew over the period of his directorship. Only a few months before his death he succeeded C. J. Livingood, who had represented the Mary M. Emery estate on the board, as vice president of Cincinnati Model Homes. And after Fred Geier's death, his youngest brother, Walter Geier, was elected as a director. He would be representing the Fred A. Geier estate on the board.

Through the Cincinnati Model Homes Company, Fred Geier was actively involved in the effort to provide quality housing for workers. The Oakley housing projects were primarily, if not exclusively, set aside for the Mill's employees and for others who worked in the plants of the Oakley factory colony.

It was an innovative concept that in its heyday gained praise from housing experts across the nation. It managed to avoid the opprobrium of industrial housing elsewhere [e.g., the company mill towns in the South and West] and remained true to its purpose. The Model Homes Company's efforts to provide housing for black workers hindered its expansion at times into various neighborhoods and suburbs. Housing for black workers, even if the developments themselves were segregated, was not embraced by many at the time.

Fred A. Geier also displayed a progressive tendency when he employed an African-American, Harry Williams, as his personal secretary. Mr. Williams handled many corporate matters. Such an appointment was rare during the first decades of the twentieth century, and likely was unique for any major United States industrial company.

Looking back it appears that many of the criticisms of the Cincinnati Model Homes Company were inconsequential. One of the most frequent criticisms voiced by "reformers" was about an unattractive sameness to the units. Such an aesthetic concern appears trivial set against the workers' tenements of that day as well as the "projects" that characterized the federal government's later involvement in building low-income housing.

The Cincinnati Model Homes Company was an imaginative enterprise. But the deaths of Jacob Schmidlapp and Fred A. Geier deprived the company of much of its drive and it had largely receded from the public eye at the time of its dissolution in the late 1970s.

CORPORATE WELFARE REVISITED

The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's corporate welfare program attempted to make the Mill a good place to work by providing many services. Most of these services were administered by Dr. Geier, who headed the Employees Services Department, a forerunner of Cincinnati Milacron's Personnel Department.

Management at the Mill and at other progressive companies was certainly aware that the establishment of corporate welfare programs helped to increase production and build employee loyalty and cooperation. Dr. Geier best summarized this philosophy in 1916 when he described his job as follows:

> ...in charge of the most modern, broadly conceived personal service department in industry—guaranteed to relieve the employees of more pains and the Company of more "kale" [money] than any similar organization in the country. It not only prevents sickness, accidents and death, but strikes as well. It pulls the teeth and legs equally well. It's the new note in factory management, and as such prevents bankruptcy.

Welfare capitalism was arrested by the Depression of 1920-1921. The *Employees' Service News* and Mill band were casualties, and other programs were also discontinued during the Great Depression, when welfare capitalism withered across the land. And, at many companies, the New Deal era witnessed many new government programs and widespread unionization. Many corporate welfare functions were now assumed by the Federal Government and unions.

What is interesting is that, in many important aspects, at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company welfare capitalism survived the Great Depression, the New Deal and the death of Fred A. Geier. New employee facilities such as softball diamonds and the East Lodge were constructed by employees during an economic turndown in 1938. Two years earlier a new company magazine, *The Milling Review*, made its debut.

Employee loyalty to the Mill remained as solid under Frederick V. Geier's presidency as it had been under his father. Attempts at unionization failed, as the unions were never able to gather the number of signatures required to hold a representational election.

EPILOGUE

To summarize the life of Fred A. Geier in a few paragraphs after writing many pages is not easy. As one friend wrote at the time of his death, "It is not years that count, but deeds; such deeds that have made an indelible impression upon all those who came within his circle, indeed upon the whole community."

He was a heroic figure whose many deeds do not need to be embellished, whose life needs no gilding. Frederick V. Geier, in his fervent admiration of his father, permitted others to conclude that his father was a completely self-made man who came across a struggling firm, the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company, and transformed it into a name that made Cincinnati famous. This is because young Fred became the head of the family at the time of his father's death and struggled to keep the family together and financially afloat.

Fred A. Geier's numerous achievements and good deeds, however, stand on their own and do not require any Horatio Alger spins. The Geier family had already obtained a comfortable lifestyle and prosperous standing, certainly by the time they moved out of Cincinnati's West End to their Ohio Avenue hilltop house. Fred A. Geier's father, Philip Geier, was a financial backer of various new enterprises and technologies and it is certain that he had understandings with the officers of the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company about his oldest son obtaining a position with their enterprise. To be sure it was small (about 25 men and boys) and struggling and would not take off until young Fred came aboard to give it direction.

While the Geier household was big and busy, there is no indication that Fred A. Geier found his role of head of the family to be a burden. Sophia Louise Geier remained the loving mother of the flock. At the time of Philip Geier's death in 1887, there were still grandparents, the Otto Ottens, living as well as various aunts, uncles, cousins, and in-laws. There were also numerous family friends and household help.

On the other hand, again in the words of his now unknown friend, we can conclude, "Fred was so much to so many people. We who recognize his gentleness, generosity and altruism will never find anyone quite equal to him."

A historical perspective (it is now 60 years since his death) sometimes is quite different. Yet, to his family and friends and firm, Fred A. Geier has remained without equal.

His children all made significant contributions to the civic and cultural life of their communities. Frederick V. Geier guided the Mill through even greater growth and development for nearly 25 years as president. After his retirement from the Mill presidency in November 1958, he served as chairman of the board from 1958 to 1963, and as chairman of the executive committee from 1963 to 1976. Paul Esselborn Geier's career was in the U.S. Foreign Service, where he witnessed and participated in great moments in modern diplomatic history. Helen Geier Flynt and her husband, Henry, were great benefactors of Historic Deerfield in Massachusetts. Virginia Geier McCurdy, along with her husband Gilbert, was a leader in philanthropic and mercantile enterprises in Rochester, New York.

It was Fred A. Geier's hope that what he built at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company would survive his passing. Today's Cincinnati Milacron is, as it was in the past, a world leader in building machine tools. And the Mill has successfully diversified into plastics machinery, computer controls, software, composites, processing systems, automated flexible manufacturing cells, gauging systems, precision grinding wheels, metalworking fluids, and metalcutting tool inserts.

Fred A. Geier's legacy to the Queen City, especially to its educational and charitable institutions, continues to enrich community life. His impact was recognized in 1991 by the Cincinnati Historical Society and Junior Achievement when he was one of six elite leaders

elected to the charter class of Cincinnati's Business Hall of Fame. His purposeful life, as the Reverend Ascham said at the time of his death, "was a rare intertwining of busy, practicable performance and unquenchable idealism."

His visions were daring. But through his sure hands, clear head and warm heart he was able to bring about many of his dreams. He was an inspiration to all those who knew him. We have all benefitted from of Fred A. Geier's life and accomplishments. Indeed, his life did make a difference.

GEIER & RELATED FAMILIES CHRONOLOGY

1694 Johann Just Geyer born; he is the earliest Geier family ancestor identified.

1796 (31 December) Birth of George Adam Mayer in Mosbach, Baden, Germany.

1810 (22 February) Birth of Friedrich Gottfried Geier, Fred A. Geier's grandfather, in Bosenbach, Rhine Palatinate, Kingdom of Bavaria.

1824 (29 February) Marriage of George Adam Mayer and Margaretha Catharina Strohhauer in Mosbach.

1831 (4 August) Adolphus William Lotze, grandfather of Amanda Mayer Geier, starts for America from Germany; he arrives in Baltimore on 24 December.

1832 George Adam Mayer family emigrated to America and landed in Baltimore in August. Virginius Marius Mayer reportedly born on "high seas" en route to New World on 3 August 1832.

1834 Marriage of Friedrich Gottfried Geier and Luise Rhineberger in Bosenbach, Rhine Palatinate, Kingdom of Bavaria.

1835 (February) The George Adam Mayer family moves to Henderson, Kentucky, and begins a gunsmithing business.

1838 Birth of Philip Geier, the second son of Friedrich and Luise Geier, in Weilerbach, Rhine Palatinate, Kingdom of Bavaria. Philip Geier, the father of Fred A. Geier, would emigrate to America with his parents, two brothers and two sister in the years following the Revolution of 1848-1849.

1839 (6 March) Otto Otten granted citizenship in the Free City of Bremen. He had previously lived in the village of Riede, Kingdom of Hanover.

(28 April) Marriage of Otto Otten and Louise Marianne Elizabeth Tangeman at St. Peter's Cathedral in Bremen.

Adolphus Lotze invents and receives a patent for the first hot-air furnace. He commences production in Cincinnati, where he is backed by Miles Greenwood.

1840 (18 February) Adolphus Lotze marries Magdalena Bering, a descendant of Danish nobility. One of her ancestors was the Danish navigator, Vitus Bering, the discoverer of the Bering Strait and Sea. Her grandfather was said to have helped frame the Napoleonic Code. A line of attorneys in her family has been traced back to the fourteenth century.

1842 (7 September) Birth of Sophia Louise Otten, the mother of Fred A. Geier, in the Free City of Bremen.

1848-1849 Revolution flares throughout Germany's Rhineland. Karl Schurz, later a United States senator and army general, sent to arrest the Catholic priest in Weilerbach where the Geier family was living.

1851 (14 April) Otto Otten and his family receive permission to maintain citizenship in Bremen for five years while they reside in Cincinnati. They will assist Diedrich Otten, who is in the tobacco business, and it is Diedrich who sponsors the Otto Otten family's emigration.

(20 October) Reported date of sailing of Friedrich Geier and family to America. Departure is from Le Havre in France. Seven persons comprise the family unit.

(22 December) Geier family arrives in New Orleans where relatives already reside. One family member is Karl (Charles) Geier, Friedrich Geier's younger brother.

1852 (16 March) Date Jacob F. Geier, brother of Philip Geier, gave for arrival in Cincinnati. It is possible that he arrived in the Queen City first and the rest of the family followed.

1854 (August) Deaths in Cincinnati of August and Philippina Geier, siblings of Philip, Jacob, and Louise Geier. Burial is in the German Protestant Cemetery, today known as the Walnut Hills Cemetery of Cincinnati.

1855 Clashes in Cincinnati between German immigrants and nativists. Pauline Rehfuss Esselborn recalled these troubled times in her *Recollections.*

1859 (28 March) Philip Geier granted United States citizenship.

1861 (8 September) Philip Geier marries Sophie Louise Otten. The marriage is recorded in Cincinnati, although family tradition long held that the ceremony took place in Ironton, Ohio, where various Ottens resided.

Friedrich Gottfried Geier retires from the wood-turning business and sells his interest to his oldest son, Jacob Geier.

1862 Birth of Anna Geier [Tangeman].

1864 Birth of Emma D. Geier [Cone].

1865 Julius Esselborn, father of Juliet Esselborn, and his sister Henrietta, known in the family as Aunt Nettie, came to Cincinnati. Julius Esselborn establishes a wholesale millinery house, a branch of a New York firm, which he and his brother, Albert, later took over.

1866 (23 June) Birth of Friedrich (Frederick) August Geier. Baptism at Zion German Evangelical Church follows on 26 August.

(10 December) Birth of Amanda Mayer to Virginius Marius Mayer and Charlotte Lotze Mayer.

1866 John Roebling completes the Cincinnati Suspension Bridge. The master bridge builder was responsible for recruiting George Adam Mayer to emigrate to America when he was an agent of the Muelhausen Emigration Society.

1867 Birth of Matilda Geier [Mayer].

The growing Geier family moves to 78 Melancton in Cincinnati's West End. Circa 1879-1880 the family moves to a hilltop site on Ohio Avenue in "suburban" Fairview.

1869 Birth of Louise A. Geier.

1870 (9 August) Julius Esselborn and Pauline Rehfuss marry at St. John's Church at 12th and Elm Streets by Pastor Kroell.

1871 Jacob Geier purchases Philip Geier's interest in the wood-working business, which was located at 17 Laurel Street in Cincinnati's West End.

1872 Philip Geier establishes his own wood-turning business at 66 Oliver Street. This West End building still stands.

(27 February) Birth of Emilie Esselborn [Crane], Juliet Esselborn Geier's oldest sister.

1874 (27 April) Birth of Otto Philip Geier.

1875 (2 September) Birth of Juliet Esselborn [Geier].

1876 (18 September) Birth of Philip Otto Geier.

1877 (15 August) Birth of Laura Esselborn [Merryweather], Juliet's youngest sister.

1878 Birth of Walter H. Geier.

1880 Birth of Norma E. Geier.

(Palm Sunday) Frederick A. Geier (hereafter Fred Geier) confirmed at Zion German Evangelical Church.

1884 Graduation of Fred Geier from Woodward High School. Summer believed spent clerking in his Uncle Otto Otten's drug store in Ironton, Ohio.

1886 Fred Geier departs for Newton, Kansas, where he is in charge of the real estate department of the First National Bank of Newton.

1887 (April) Fred Geier returns to Cincinnati from Kansas.

1887 (7 May) Philip Geier dies while beginning to address meeting of the German Evangelical Church Synod (Indiana District) that was meeting in Boonville, Indiana. Burial is in Spring Grove Cemetery.

(June) Fred Geier begins working at the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company.

(16 August) Fred Geier purchases one-third interest in the Cincinnati Screw and Tap Company from Jacob Bloom, company president.

(5 September) Fred Geier elected secretary and treasurer of the company.

1888 (28 March) Fred Geier joins the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church through a "profession of faith." His siblings and mother remain at Zion German Evangelical Church until 1 April 1896.

Mrs. Philip Geier is the first president of the German Deaconess Hospital's *Damen Verein* (Ladies Aid).

1889 (26 April) Golden wedding anniversary party in Cincinnati for Otto and Louise Tangeman Otten. Their four children are all alive and three are living in Cincinnati, while son Otto is a pharmacist in Cincinnati.

(10 May) Company stockholders approve the sale of the screw and tap business and take a new name, The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company, which would not be changed again until 1970.

The Julius Esselborn family moved to Portsmouth, Ohio.

1891 Construction begins on The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company's new plant at Spring Grove Avenue and Alfred Street.

1892 (21 September) Marriage of Fred Geier and Amanda Mayer by the Rev. Joseph Henry Cone.

1893 Fred and Amanda Geier live in Fairview Heights, probably on University Court.

(3 May) Panic of 1893 begins. Business is at a standstill and The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company curtails operations.

(5 September) Birth of Frederick Virginius Geier.

(6 December) Marriage of Emma D. Geier to the Rev. Joseph Henry Cone.

1894 (26 November) Death of George Adam Mayer, grandfather of Amanda Geier, and the first Mayer to emigrate to the United States. Just a few weeks short of his 97th birthday, he was the oldest man in Henderson, Kentucky; he had outlived his children.

1895 (18 March) Birth of Helen Margaret Geier.

1895 (15 July) Frederick Luecke, Mill vice-president and Geier family friend, sells his approximate one-third interest in the company and retires on the 17th. George A. Mayer, Fred Geier's brother-in-law, purchases some of the shares and becomes vice-president.

(4 November) Helene Billing's *Polter Abend* is followed by her wedding to Howard Wurlitzer the next day. It was described as a grand social occasion. Juliet Esselborn was a bridesmaid.

1896 Otto P. Geier graduates from Ohio Medical College.

Fred Geier makes his first trip abroad with stops in Bremen, Berlin, Vienna, Paris, and London.

1898 (18 May) Birth of Virginia Amanda Geier.

(20 July) Death of Amanda Mayer Geier.

1899 (13 July) Fred Geier proposes selling The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company to the Niles Tool Works Company for $800,000. Niles declines to buy.

(19 October) Perrin March secures option to buy the Mill with the intention of putting together a milling machine trust that would control up to 85 per cent of all milling machines built in the United States. The option was not exercised.

1900 Fred Geier travels to Europe to attend the Paris Exposition. The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was awarded a gold medal for a new milling machine design and gained an international reputation.

1901 Fred Geier family is living at Auburndale Apartments, located directly west of the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church.

Strike closes Cincinnati metal trades shops.

1902 (11 January) Marriage of C. Wood Walter to Margaret Geier, sister of Fred Geier.

Fred Geier appointed to the board of directors of the Ohio Mechanics' Institute, the start of 32 years' service on the board.

(16 December) Fred Geier meets Juliet Esselborn in Portsmouth, Ohio, at the wedding of Dr. James F. Edwards to Marjorie Franklin.

(17 October) Fred Geier elected a director of the German National Bank, possibly the first of many directorships that would follow. At the time of America's entry into World War I, the bank's name was changed to the Lincoln National Bank and it is today a part of the Fifth-Third Bank.

1903 Fred Geier moves his family to 2301 Grandview. It would be his residence for the rest of his life.

1903 (15 August) Likely date of Fred Geier's engagement to Juliet Esselborn.

(24 November) Geier and Esselborn wedding at home of the bride's mother, Mrs. Pauline Esselborn, in Portsmouth. *Lohengrin's* wedding march sung by Walter, Philip, Norma, and Louise Geier. The bridal couple sails to Europe aboard the *S. S. Irene* and returns to Cincinnati in early May 1904.

1904 The Fred Geiers along with Norma Geier attend the St. Louis World's Fair.

(14 November) Philip O. Geier starts his Mill career with a job in the purchasing department.

1905 Fred Geier purchases common stock of Frederick Holz, Mill president and superintendent 1887-1905, when he decides to retire. F. A. Geier then becomes president of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company.

Fred Geier chosen a director of the University of Cincinnati.

1906 (17 March) Fred Geier elected to membership in the Commercial Club.

(7 May) Death of William Henry Crane, husband of Emilie Esselborn Crane and father of P. Willard Crane. Dr. Crane died while addressing a medical group on the same date that Philip Geier had died in 1887 addressing a church convention.

(16 July) The Factory Colony Company organized and its stock subscribed. The factory colony was one of the nation's pioneer industrial parks.

(22 September) Marriage of Paul Esselborn to Margaret Dowling in Portsmouth.

(20 December) Engineering plans and cost estimates approved for the Modern Foundry Company. Walter H. Geier becomes the first manager when the foundry was completed in 1907.

George Binns and Elmer Otting are the first co-op students placed at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company.

1907 (19 February - 12 March) Fred Geier visits the Panama Canal and Caribbean as part of a fact-finding tour undertaken by the Commercial Clubs of Cincinnati, Boston, Chicago, and St. Louis.

Fred Geier elected a director of the Central Trust Company.

The City Party, founded as a reform movement, champions municipal government guided by sound business principles. Fred Geier is the City Party chairman and presides at its Music Hall rally. Election day finds the political bosses beating the businessmen.

1908 (21 December) Marriage of George Merryweather and Laura Esselborn.

1908 Fred Geier and family travel to Europe and back aboard the *S. S. New Amsterdam*. The family travels extensively throughout the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and Switzerland. Their itinerary includes numerous stops in Germany including a visit to Weilerbach, the final Geier family home in Germany.

1909 (2 February) Fred Geier accepts the presidency of the University of Cincinnati. The board deeply splits over whether to retain Charles Dabney as president of the University.

1910 (17 March) Fred Geier elected a trustee of the Children's Home of Cincinnati.

Henry Hunt elected as a reform mayor; appoints Dr. Otto P. Geier to his cabinet with post as Cincinnati's director of charities. (A present day name for the position would be director of social services or welfare director.)

1911 Fred Geier becomes the first permanent chairman of the Conference of Charities and Philanthropies, a forerunner of the Community Chest in Cincinnati.

(18-22 June) Fred Geier travels to the White House with the Commercial Club to participate in the celebration of President and Mrs. Taft's silver wedding anniversary.

1912 (13-14 February) Fred Geier represents the National Machine Tool Builders' Association in testimony before the U. S. Senate Finance Committee on tariff legislation.

(August) Various Geiers and Cranes at Whitehall Inn, Camden, Maine, when Edna St. Vincent Millay first recited her poem "Renascence."

(13 September) Anniversary dinner celebrating Fred Geier's quarter-century in business.

(September) Frederick V. Geier enters Williams College.

(30 September) The National Prosperity League organized to aid President Taft's reelection. Fred Geier named the League's chairman.

1913 Helen Geier graduates from Miss Doherty' College Preparatory School for Girls.

(15 November) Marriage of Philip O. Geier and Gladys Jones in Kansas City.

1914 (April) Dr. Otto P. Geier begins his Mill career and establishes a medical department.

(16 June) Fred Geier sails to Europe aboard the *Kronprinzessin Cecilia* and returns 1 August on the eve of World War I. Juliet, Frederick, Helen and Virginia spend part of the summer at Lake Placid, New York.

The Esselborn family home in Portsmouth is sold.

1914 (19 November) Birth of Paul Esselborn Geier to Fred and Juliet Geier.

1915 (20 December) Debut of Helen Geier at Grandview.

1916 (23 June) A major milestone reached, Fred Geier celebrates his 50th birthday. His friends and associates compile a book of tributes for the occasion.

Fred Geier pays for the Geier Cottage that is under construction at the Children's Home. The building, a home for girls, was given as a memorial to Amanda Mayer Geier.

(29 July) Marriage of Walter H. Geier to Carol Perrenot at the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church.

1918 (February 9) Marriage of Frederick Virginius Geier to Amey Massey Develin.

1919 (January) Fred Geier elected to the board of the Model Homes Association of Cincinnati. The association led the way in building housing for industrial workers.

(30 July) Birth of Mary Alice Geier, daughter of Frederick V. and Amey Geier.

1920 Lengthy strike by the International Association of Machinists closes some of Cincinnati's metal trades shops. The Mill and the factory colony plants remain open and operations are near normal.

(Winter) Fred Geier family trip to California.

(5 June) Marriage of Helen Margaret Geier to Henry Needham Flynt. The ceremony and reception take place at the Grandview residence.

(25 September) Marriage of Virginia Amanda Geier to Gilbert James Cathcart McCurdy at Grandview.

1921 F. A Geiers vacation in Northwest: Glacier National Park, Victoria, and Vancouver, British Columbia.

(24 August) Birth of Amey Acheson Geier to Frederick V. and Amey Geier.

1922 (25 May) Birth of Gilbert Geier McCurdy.

(12 August) Birth of Henry Needham Flynt, Jr.

(21 August) Birth of Frederick Virginius Geier, Jr.

(24 August) Death of Sophie Louise Otten Geier, Fred Geier's mother.

1923 (5 August) Birth of Juliet Helen Flynt.

1925 (4 May) Birth of Patricia McCurdy.

(29 December) Birth of James Aylward Develin Geier.

1926 Cincinnati Milling Machine Company becomes the nation's largest machine tool builder.

Research laboratory established with Hans Ernst as its director.

Marriage of Dr. Otto P. Geier to Rosa Ingeborg "Inge" Hacker, a native of Graz, Austria.

F. A, Geier named to Reserve Board of Cincinnati Branch of Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland.

(17 May) Mill victorious in important centerless grinder litigation. Judge Thomas decides for the Mill in upholding Heim patents in case before his district court in Connecticut.

1928 (January) Fred Geier elected president of the Children's Home of Cincinnati.

(1 August) Birth of Marjorie Flynt.

1929 (27-29 September) Forty-fifth anniversary of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company celebrated in Cincinnati with a conference machine tool dealers from throughout the world.

(October) Great Depression begins. Full impact to Cincinnati and the Mill comes later.

1930 Commercial Club journeys to Cuba where Fred Geier reflects on the founders of the Club in remarks at a banquet.

1932 (1 October) Fred Geier appointed chairman of the Committee on Industrial Rehabilitation for the Cincinnati area. The committee was part of a nationwide campaign to create jobs that had been proposed by President Hoover.

1933 (21 July) Death of Mrs. Charlotte R. Mayer at age 91. She had been struck by an automobile after getting out of a street car. The mother of Amanda Mayer Geier was said to have been a determined lady who, according to family lore, held off marauders during the Civil War in Henderson, Kentucky.

1934 (6 February) Fred Geier replaces Charles J. Livingood as vice president of the Model Homes Company of Cincinnati.

(March) Fred Geier vacations in Augusta, Georgia, where he becomes ill.

(27 March) Fred Geier returns to his office at the Mill for the first time in weeks. He returns home for lunch, where he succumbs while reading mail in the library.

A NOTE ON NAMES

One of the most difficult aspects in researching the story of Fred A. Geier and the various related families was related to the spelling of proper names. The spellings often change over generations and in the movement from the Old World to the New World. The Geier name itself was originally spelled "Geyer," but dropping the "y" for an "i" occurred in Germany as well as in America. The spellings are really interchangeable. The reader of this volume will also realize that over time Friedrich becomes Frederick, Heinrich changes to Henry, and Johann is simply John.

In a few instances a spelling has been used to reflect how the name was generally pronounced in America. Thus, Fred A. Geier's paternal aunt is "Louisa" Geier Tuchter instead of "Louise" as she was baptized. Louisa was the spelling used consistently in Cincinnati city directories and in historian Charles Frederic Goss's biographical sketch on her son August H. Tuechter.

Logic would have indicated that Mary Lotze Baader, who was christened Maria Anna in Cincinnati, and who lived in Germany for 54 years after her marriage, would have been known as Maria. However, "Mary" is how the family spelled the name and that is the spelling inscribed on the Baader family monument in Mittenwald, Bavaria.

Every effort has been made to verify spellings and dates. Continuing family research may reveal new information. Thus, apologies are offered to the critical reader for any errors or omissions.

Paul Willard Crane (7 October 1902-9 December 1992) is at the center of any account of relationships among the Geiers and the Cranes. As the only child of Dr. William Henry Crane and Emilie Esselborn Crane, he was a favorite nephew of Fred A. Geier, and certainly he was the one afforded the most lengthy and intimate observation of his uncle. And Willard Crane (he was most frequently referred to by his middle name or by P. Willard Crane) certainly enhanced his place in the family history by the work he commenced in middle life at the Mill.

His early career included direction of plastics research at E. I. du Pont where he played a leading role in guiding the successful R & D and early marketing of many du Pont plastic products. During World War II, Willard Crane directed technical groups of nuclear engineers at the Hanford Works in Washington State, where pioneering work was done for the government in the field of atomic energy.

In 1953 he returned to Cincinnati where he joined the Mill, which was then headed by Frederick V. Geier. At that time he was given the task of exploring new fields and products as the Mill was seriously trying to be more than just a machine tool company. It was clear even then that future corporate success required the Mill to enter some newer and less cyclical arenas.

In that assignment he was successful. His research efforts were, in large measure, responsible for the Mill's entry into reinforced plastics, printed circuit board material, and, ultimately, the highly successful plastics machinery business. His background in plastics was immensely helpful in the Mill's getting involved in plastics processing machinery. His efforts were rewarded with increased responsibilities and titles. He was elected a vice president of the Mill in 1959 and became a member of the board from 1963 until his retirement in 1969.

A graduate of Withrow High School, he entered the University of Cincinnati's College of Engineering where he graduated in 1926 with two degrees: one in chemical engineering and the other, a master of science. Then he was off to post-World War I Europe where he spent two years on a fellowship at the University of Munich doing graduate research in physical chemistry.

It seems possible that Willard may have enrolled in the University of Cincinnati even if it was not the hometown school that, through Herman Schneider, was achieving widespread fame through its cooperative education program in engineering. Both of Willard's parents earlier had connections with the local university. His mother had enrolled at the University in 1896 to study history and, after studies at the Sorbonne, returned in 1901 to teach French. She was also the school's first dean of women, a position she held during the fall of 1901. Presumably, her engagement to Dr. Crane that fall and plans for an April wedding necessitated her abandonment of a life in academe.

Dr. William Henry Crane, born in Cincinnati in 1868, was a graduate of the Medical College of Ohio. His father, Henry Lyon Crane, was born in New Albany, Indiana, in 1828. He moved to the Queen City in 1852 where he entered the wholesale shoe business. Dr. Crane's father prospered and he was among the city's elite for he became a member of the exclusive Commercial Club in 1880. At the time of his death at age 92 in 1926, he had been active in church affairs for seven decades. His affiliations were with the Second Presbyterian Church and the Church of the Covenant.

Dr. Crane was not blessed with the longevity that one might have imagined he would have inherited with his aged father. In the years following his medical school graduation in the late 1890s, he became a well-known physician and, with Dr. Otto P. Geier, an activist in clean-milk legislation and other civic crusades. He was a member of the University of Cincinnati's College of Medicine and had been on the staff of the German Deaconess Hospital.

Even though Dr. Crane had not been in the best of health, his death on 7 May 1906 was both sudden and unexpected. That Monday evening he was lecturing 50 or more fellow physicians who were members of the Academy of Medicine. His subject was pure milk and, half-way through his presentation, he turned to the table behind him for another specimen.

In so doing he staggered forward a step and collapsed. Needless to say medical assistance was at hand and even before he reached the floor he was caught by Dr. Joseph A. Hall. But within two minutes Dr. Crane was dead. His last words, which were characteristic of his gentlemanly manner, were, "I beg the pardon of the gentlemen of the Academy of Medicine." Varied and lengthy efforts to revive Dr. Crane failed. A blood clot at the base of the brain was believed to have been the cause of death.

Dr. Crane was survived by three brothers and three sisters in addition to his wife, young son, and aged father. Two of his brothers are known to have achieved a degree of standing in their respective fields. One brother was Ira H. Crane who, at the time of his death in Hollywood in 1946, was the dean of Cincinnati advertising executives. Ira Crane was active in Presbyterian Church affairs and had been a trustee of Covenant First Presbyterian Church for three decades and its treasurer for 16 years. For many years he was the only white member of the Board of Directors of the Shelter Home for Negro Orphans.

Another brother, Robert Lupton Crane, became an employee of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company in 1893. In that depression year it was critical for salesmen to go out and find customers. Fred A. Geier personally trained Crane to become a "traveling missionary" for the Mill. And travel he did. For nearly five years (1893-1898) his territory extended from Denver in the West to New Orleans in the South to Portland, Maine, in the East. He often departed from Cincinnati on the second of January and returned to Cincinnati nearly a year later, on Christmas morning, when he would meet with Fred A. Geier to exchange holiday greetings.

In 1898 Robert Crane settled down in Buffalo where he represented the Mill in western New York as a machine tool dealer and distributor. He married Carol Matthews of California, according to one press account, a week before the wedding of his brother to Emilie Esselborn in 1902. One child, Robert, was born to this union. Robert Crane died in Buffalo on 11 November 1940.

It was Robert Crane's nephew, Willard Crane, whose Mill career was described earlier, who continued the family and civic ties to the Queen City into recent years. In 1931 Willard married Verona Harman of Columbus and to them were born four sons: William Crane and Bradford Crane, both living in Washington, D.C.; Stephen Crane of Seattle; and Robert Crane of San Francisco.

After retirement from the Mill and until 1989, Willard and Verona lived on a 200-acre farm near Loveland, Ohio. It was there that he was an avid grape grower and wine maker. In both his life's work and hobbies he seems to have inherited much from his maternal great grandfather, Dr. Louis Rehfuss. This Cincinnati pioneer was

a chemist and devoted himself to the scientific culture of grapes. Rehfuss was once, in the time of Nicholas Longworth, a president of the Wine Growers' Association.

Willard served for several years as a trustee of the Knox Presbyterian Church, including a term as president. He had a particular interest in geriatric medicine and served on the board of trustees of Bethesda Hospital. Music was another of his serious avocations. For a number of years he was chairman of the Cincinnati Chamber Music Society.

In 1989 Willard and Verona moved to Issaquah, Washington, to be near a son. It was there that he died 9 December 1992 at age 89.

THE JACOB GEIERS

Philip Geier, Fred A. Geier's father, had six siblings. Only Philip's sister, Louise, and his older brother, Jacob C. Geier, lived to maturity. The life of Jacob Geier was one that was witness to many successes, but perhaps also more tragedies than were experienced by his brother.

Jacob Geier was born in Neunkirchen am Potzberg, Rhine Palatinate, on 19 March 1836. Soon after his birth his parents moved to Weilerbach where all of his siblings were born. Jacob received his schooling in Weilerbach. In the village he began an apprenticeship in his father's trade, which was wood and horn lathing. When he was 15, and before the apprenticeship was completed, the Geier family immigrated to America. The family sailed from Le Havre, France, on 20 October 1851 and arrived in New Orleans 22 December 1851.

Jacob immediately found work as a carpenter in the Crescent City, but within a few months he moved on to Cincinnati. For approximately six years he worked at various lathe shops and furniture factories. Finally, in association with his father, he set up a lathe shop at the corner of Clay and Liberty Streets. They later moved the business to Locke Street, and this is where they suffered a setback when fire destroyed their operation.

Around 1863 Jacob and Philip Geier established a furniture factory on Clinton Street, but within a short time the enterprise was given up and the two brothers joined to found a large scale lathe works. By the early 1870s the two brothers were operating independently. Jacob purchased Philip's interest in the Laurel Street works and ran it as a sole proprietorship.

Jacob Geier made the manufacture of beer bungs (the plugs for barrels) a specialty and, on account of this, was known as Spunden-Geier (bung Geier). His product was shipped throughout the country. Jacob's shop was able to produce 15,000-20,000 bungs daily.

For approximately six years, 1875-1881, Jacob Geier was associated with John H. Kroeger in a business that manufactured parlor brackets and fancy cabinet wares. These wood carvings were primarily used for room decorations. Their enterprise was the largest of its type in Cincinnati that was conducted by German-Americans. After the termination of the Geier and Kroeger partnership, Jacob Geier was active for a decade selling hops and brewers' supplies.

On 27 April 1857 Jacob Geier married Anna Amelia Graeff at Zion German Evangelical Church. To this union were born eight children. Two of the children died as infants. They were Augusta Frederika (22 December 1863-14 September 1864) and Wilhelm Georg (8 August 1865-9 July 1866). Another daughter, Theresa, was dead by 1878. Theresa had married a Von Heigendorf and it is thought that she and her husband lived in Germany where she was a lady-in-waiting to the Queen of Saxony. Anna and her husband had a son, Carl, and a daughter, Theresa.

Daughter Louise married Gustav A. Rausenberger who was employed as a collector for a Cincinnati brewery, the Christian Moerlein Company. Of daughter Amelia, almost nothing has been established except that her husband's family name was Beutker.

More is known about Jacob and Anna Geier's sons. The oldest son, Joseph, began his career in an area establishment that manufactured luxury carriages. On 23 February 1881, he married Katherina Zumstein, the daughter of Frank M. Zumstein.

Frank Zumstein was one of the pioneer liverymen in the Queen City and was the founder of the Zumstein Taxicab Company. From his start as a liveryman, in the years after the Civil War, he soon limited his business to that of a city horse cab company. Later, he became the first Cincinnati cab owner to motorize. Frank's brother, John, was a postmaster of Cincinnati. That the Zumsteins achieved some area prominence is evidenced by a street named for family members in Hyde Park.

It is thought that Katharina Zumstein Geier died at an early age. When Joseph Geier died on 16 November 1919, at age 64, he was survived by his wife Eva.

Jacob Geier's namesake and youngest son, Jacob, Jr., was first associated with his father in his wood turning shops. In the final two decades of the nineteenth century he was also identified as a travel agent, book keeper, real estate agent, and traveling salesman. In 1886 he was a partner of William Morrison Hugle in the Fourth Street office of Hugle and Geier. They were listed as real estate agents and auctioneers, who also dealt with notes, stocks, and bonds.

Jacob Geier, Jr., married Bertha Streitmann. Bertha was the daughter of George H. and Ann Louise Streitmann. The father, a native of Hanover, began his career as a cooper. George Streitmann later established a biscuit factory that bore his name and was, for many years, one of Cincinnati's oldest and best known industries. After his marriage to Bertha, Jacob entered the flour brokerage business. Jacob Geier died 5 July 1926.

One son, Louis, was born to Jacob and Bertha Streitmann Geier. For 10 years (circa 1910-1920) Louis was the general manager of the Felber Biscuit Company in Columbus, Ohio, an enterprise owned by the George H. Streitmann Sons Company. Then, Louis returned to Cincinnati where he entered the flour brokerage field with which his father had been identified. He died at age 56, on 4 May 1940. He was survived by his wife, Dorothy Campbell Geier, and an adopted daughter, Dotty-Lou.

Mystery surrounds the identity of Jacob and Anna Geier's eighth child. Family oral history accounts relate that there was a son who was murdered in a bar in New Orleans in the nineteenth century. The son was reported to have made a disparaging remark about a bar patron, of French or Cajun origin, being too small or too young to drink anything but milk. The insult was avenged by a deadly pistol shot.

Jacob Geier, who saw many of his children precede him in death, lost his wife, Anna, on 23 July 1878. By 1889 he was remarried to Margaretha, a German-born widow whose maiden name was Urschel. She died 8 November 1898, a little more than two months before her husband succumbed on 15 January 1899.

THE LOTZES

In the words of Paul Esselborn Geier, there were once "lots of Lotzes." The family name has disappeared over the course of three generations. Adolphus William Lotze, a native of Muenden in the Kingdom of Hanover, was born in 1812. After completing his public school education, at age 14, he was apprenticed to a tinner named Wielert. The tinner Wielert was the father of Henry Wielert who operated the famed Wielert's Cafe in Cincinnati. It was at the cafe that Boss Cox held court and made many of the decisions and appointments that affected the city's government and public life. Both Adolphus Lotze and Henry Wielert arrived in Cincinnati in 1831.

Emigrating from Germany to Baltimore, Lotze worked briefly as a tinner in Baltimore, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and other eastern cities before settling in the Queen City. He was first employed by the Resor Stove Works at $12 a week. It has also been written that he came to Cincinnati to make lamp reflectors for steamboats. In 1835 he formed a partnership with John Lohn to manufacture stoves.

In 1839 the partnership ended. Lohn was an official of the German Methodist Church. He later moved to Ludlow, Kentucky, where he died in 1883.

About the time of the partnership dissolution, Lotze invented a hot air furnace and began production at the foundry of his friend, Miles Greenwood. The pioneer iron works magnate soon loaned Lotze money to build a five-story brick building on Walnut Street, between Fifth and Sixth Streets. That building, along with a two-story brick building in the rear, remained the site of the Lotze family business operation until 1903. It was a very successful enterprise and its furnaces and, later, its cooking ranges were sold throughout much of the country.

On 18 February 1840 Adolphus Lotze married Magdalena Bering at St. John's Church. St. John's was an independent German Protestant Church (although many hold that it followed Lutheran rites and confessions) that affiliated with the Unitarian Church after World War I. The Berings were Roman Catholic and descended from Danish nobility. Magdalena is believed to have been the great niece of the famous explorer Vitus Bering. After her marriage Magdalena became a Protestant, or at least she abandoned her Roman Catholicism.

The marriage was blessed with five sons and five daughters, which was the inspiration for Paul Geier's remark about lots of Lotzes. The first child, August Anton (1841-1844), was the only one not to live to maturity.

Charlotte Regina Lotze, born 24 June 1842. Charlotte was the mother of Amanda V. Mayer, the first wife of Fred A. Geier. The accounts of Charlotte's and Amanda's descendants have been chronicled elsewhere in this volume. Charlotte lived a long life, she was 91 when she was struck by an automobile after exiting a street car in Cincinnati. For her resolve in standing off, or standing up to, Southern marauders during the Civil War, family members characterized her as the "Barbara Fritchie" of Henderson, Kentucky.

The Lotzes' fourth child, and third daughter, Rosina Elisa, was born 4 December 1845. She married Clements Nulsen (1845-1894), a tobacco merchant, who owned warehouses at the foot of Main Street in Cincinnati. Mr. Nulsen was also one of the original wholesale merchants in Cincinnati. A graduate of St. Xavier College, he originally intended to become a priest. But he later rejected religion. He was one of the founders of the Cincinnati Crematory and for a long time was its vice president.

The Nulsens had four sons and two daughters: Albert Walter (1868-1910), Carl A. (1870-1946), Herbert (1877-1918), Eric Darwin (1873-1962), Irma (1883-?), and Alma (1875-1960).

The oldest, Albert Walter Nulsen, was a stockbroker whose life came to a untimely end. He and his wife, Elsa Louise, had one son Marvin Emil (1893-1953) who was acting general manager of Ryan Aircraft (which built the "Spirit of St. Louis") and earlier, while at the Hoover Company, invented the roller brush used in upright sweepers.

Carl married Irma Spicker and they were the parents of a daughter, Marie, who married a Norwood High School classmate, John K. Grisard on 1 September 1917. John Grisard had entered the University of Cincinnati in September 1913 but withdrew after America's entry into World War I. He applied for a commission in the Aviation Section of the Signal Officers Reserve Corps.

Lieutenant Grisard was among the first United States aviators to reach France. A fearless pilot, he died 1 May 1918 at Assondum, France, when his plane fell 3,000 feet to earth. He was the only Cincinnati aviator to be killed in action.

Cincinnati's first airport, near Cooper Road in Blue Ash, was dedicated in 1922 as Grisard Field. Among the noted aviators attending the field's dedication was Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, America's Ace of Aces.

Fourth son Eric Darwin Nulsen, his middle name reflects his father's embrace of science and rejection of religion, married Hulda Mueller who lived to be 105, the longevity record in a group of families populated with old-timers. Eric was a tobacco distributor and the fourth generation Nulsen employed in the tobacco business. Eric and Hulda's only child, Vera Plue, lives in California. Vera is the mother of Ohio State Representative Dale Van Vyven (R.-Springdale).

Daughter Alma married Carl Widmann and lived in Washington State. Alma and Carl were parents of two children, a son Nulsen Widmann resides in Longview, Washington, with his wife. Daughter Irma married Herbert Steves and lived in New York. Irma and Herbert had one daughter, Mary Louise Steves Smith.

Adolphus W. Lotze, Jr., was born in 1847 and entered into partnership with his father in 1864. While he was married, the name of his wife remains unknown. There were no children.

Son August H. Lotze, born 11 August 1849, also entered the family business. His death on 25 May 1909 was ruled a suicide. He was married, but the couple was childless.

The fourth son, Christian Matthew Lotze, declined an invitation to join the family firm. Believed to have been born 8 October 1850, he attended Cincinnati public schools and graduated from Woodward School. His mother is credited with influencing his decision to study law. It is said that there were lawyers in the Bering family continuously from the fourteenth century. Magdalena Bering's father was an attorney; her grandfather helped draft the Napoleonic Code.

Christian read for the law under Stanley Matthews, then judge of the common pleas court of Hamilton County. Matthews was later an United States senator and a justice of the Supreme Court. Christian attended lectures at the Cincinnati Law School where he received a bachelor of law's degree in 1871. He was only 20 at the time and too young for admission to the bar. Hence, he undertook further studies in Europe. He attended courses at the Universities of Leipzig, Heidelberg, and Berlin.

Upon his return to Cincinnati in 1873, he was admitted to the bar and, in 1874, entered the law office of Stallo and Kittredge. Judge Stallo would later be appointed

United States Minister to Rome. In 1875 Christian formed a partnership with Albert Bettinger, under the name of Lotze and Bettinger. This partnership continued until October 1880 when Bettinger withdrew.

He was always interested in public affairs. He was associated with Elliott H. Pendelton and Telford Groesbeck in the municipal reform effort. He, along with his brother-in-laws Clemens A. Nulsen and Virginius Marius Mayer, were founders and organizers of the Cincinnati Cremation Society in 1884.

In 1876 he made a second trip to Europe to marry his cousin, Emma Magdalena Lotze of Hanover, Germany, to whom he had become engaged in 1871. A son, Edmund William, and a daughter, Erna Magdalena, were born to this union. Erna was a high school teacher in Cincinnati (teaching German, French, and Spanish) and, later, in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Throughout his career, he was affiliated with the Democratic Party. In 1882 he was Chairman of the Democratic Reform Convention. One of the most interesting episodes in his studies and career occurred while he was at Judge Matthews's office. There, he reported the entire case on Bible reading in public schools. Judge Alfonso Taft's dissenting opinion would later be upheld by the Supreme Court and is considered to be a landmark case.

Christian Lotze succumbed 17 July 1932 at age 82, ending his life as a scholarly attorney and an influential citizen.

Mary Lotze, born 13 September 1845, married Maximilian Baader of Mittenwald, Germany. Widely regarded as the most beautiful town in the Bavarian Alps, Mittenwald has been a center of violin-making since 1684. This is when Mathias Klotz returned from an apprenticeship in Cremona, Italy, with Nicolo Amati, the father of the modern violin. The Baader family has been prominently involved in this musical enterprise since 1 January 1817. This is when Johann Anton Baader (1778-1836) formed an association with violin-maker Simon Krimer. The firm was named J. A. Baader & Company. Within a few months the partners had purchased a saw mill and Baader began to make sales trips to Holland, England, and Russia.

It was while on a sales trip to America in 1874 that Johann's grandson, Max Ignez Baader (1843-1904) married Maria Lotze. Max followed both his grandfather and father in heading the firm which grew into the oldest and most important enterprise in Mittenwald. The firm was renowned for producing high quality violins and zithers at affordable prices. It supplied instruments to various royal courts. A prominent businessman, Max Baader was also mayor of Mittenwald for many years.

Max Baader was succeeded in the firm by his son, Adolf Baader, Sr. (1875-1952). He, too, was for many years Mittenwald's mayor and an "Ehrenburger" (honored citizen) of the community. In 1935 the Mittenwald Museum Association, of which Adolf Baader, Sr. was a co-founder, utilized a part of the Baader home for the violin museum. Until 1959 the museum was under the care of Adolf Baader, Jr. (1902-1965), himself a master violin-maker, who oversaw the collection and conducted tours.

In recent times the museum has moved into more spacious quarters. The ancestral Baader family home continues to be occupied by family members. Max Baader, born in 1932 and the son of Adolf, Jr. and Eleonore Neuner Baader, was surely named for his great-grandfather. He lives in rooms filled with items of historical interest. Included among a collection of family portraits is a large oil painting of his great-grandparents, Max Ignaz Baader and Maria Lotze of Cincinnati.

It was said that Adolphus and Magdalena Lotze insisted that each of their children study a musical instrument. Louise "Lulu" M. Lotze was born 2 July 1852.

The only unmarried Lotze, Louise was tall, dark, and beautiful. She possessed an exceptional voice. Her solitary wish was to become an operatic singer. Sadly, she was discouraged from following her dream. She died 22 February 1940 at age 87.

The youngest of Adolphus and Madgalena's nine children, Amanda J. Lotze, was born 24 May 1859. She first married Adolf Seinecke (1855-1878) with whom she had two daughters. Daughter Elspeth (1885-1978) married Willis L. Gibson, a widower who died in 1950. Daughter Agnes Seinecke (1889-1976) did not marry. Several years after Adolf Seinecke passed away, Amanda married Eugene Fusshippel, who was associated with the tobacco industry. They had one daughter, Martha. She was a school teacher who died in 1988 at age 90.

Amanda, the youngest of the Lotze children, would outlive her siblings. She died 9 September 1962 at age 103.

Frederick B. Lotze, born 16 November 1853, was the fifth Lotze son. After graduating from the Ohio Mechanics' Institute, he began a partnership with his father. He remained active in the family enterprise until his retirement in 1930. Like his sister Louise, he was interested in music. He studied for many years at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and sang in early May Festival choruses.

He married Josephine Lang, the eldest daughter of Julius Lang. Mr. Lang was an early tanner and leather merchant.

The Frederick Lotzes had two daughters who lived to adulthood. A son, Julius Lang, and a daughter, Gertrude Lang, died as infants. Daughter Frieda was a distinguished teacher of speech at Walnut Hills High School. A University of Michigan professor cited her as one of the outstanding speech teachers in the country. Miss Lotze also headed the school's dramatic department. Daughter Helena, a kindergarten teacher, married William J. White. No children were born to this union.

Adolphus Lotze, the father of the clan, died in his sleep 11 December 1877. During 1875 he traveled to Europe, with his son Frederick, for medical treatment. He was diagnosed as having progressive muscular atrophy. The treatment abroad brought about no improvement.

He was 65 at the time of his passing. By all accounts, he was known to have been a hard worker who was a success in business. He and his wife contributed $500 to help start the Cincinnati Zoo. The Lotzes also assisted their friend, Clara Bauer, when she established what is today's College Conservatory of Music.

After Adolphus's death, Magdalena moved to Ohio Avenue (opposite Lyon Street) where on 16 July 1900 she died of sunstroke while working in her garden.

"An Old Citizen Dead," read the obituary headline for George Adam Mayer who died on 26 November 1894, shortly before his 97th birthday. He had outlived two wives and his three children. His granddaughter, Amanda Mayer, was the wife of Fred A. Geier from 21 September 1892 until her untimely death on 20 July 1898.

George Mayer's long life was distinctive from birth onward. Of his nativity, it was written, "As the clocks were striking the half hour in the last hour on the last day of 1796, G. A. Mayer was born in the town of Mosbach, Germany." He was the third of four children known to have been born to Johann Jakob Mayer and Clara Uher. Little is known about his two sisters except for their names and birth-dates: Johanna Margaretha, 1 September 1791; Augusta Christine, 26 October 1800. George's brother, David, fought with Napoleon's forces and froze to death during the retreat from Moscow.

George received what was described as a "reasonably good education" in Mosbach where he learned the gunsmithing trade. Here, also, in this old town on the Neckar River in Baden, he married a native daughter. His bride was Margaretha Catherina Strohhauer. The nuptial date was 29 February 1824.

For reasons unknown, although there were ample reasons to leave nineteenth century Germany, he was attracted to starting life anew in America. John Augustus Roebling, later famed as the master bridge builder, was the agent for the Muelhausen Immigration Society. Roebling's intention was to establish a colony in western Pennsylvania. George Mayer, his wife, and children set sail for America during 1832 and, according to biographical material published in Henderson, Kentucky, landed in New York City in August. However, the 1860 census and a death certificate in the possession of George A. Mayer's great granddaughter (Mrs. Jean Mayer Miner) indicate that the ship probably docked in Baltimore. The family did not stay long in the metropolis; they were soon on their way west to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Apparently, they had decided not to continue on to John Roebling's little settlement of Saxonburg north of Pittsburgh.

The Mayers remained in Pittsburgh until early 1834 when George Mayer moved on to Evansville, Indiana. In Evansville, he worked as a gunsmith. Evansville was a small settlement in that early time, with a population under 500 and not more than 80 houses. George Mayer built the first two-story frame building in town, which was located at the corner of Main and Second streets. The large building probably did not contain family quarters as George Mayer was said to be the first German to construct a building in Lamasco, now a part of Evansville.

After a year, it was time for the Mayers to move again. This move was not distant in miles, just to the nearby Ohio River town of Henderson, Kentucky. George Mayer resumed his trade, which flourished, in Henderson. On three occasions he felt compelled to open or to seek out larger facilities for his enterprise. By 1850, it appears that he had branched into the hardware business. An advertisement notes that the hardware store dealt in: cutlery, guns, agricultural implements, mill supplies, and builders' materials.

That advertisement in 1850 confirms that George Mayer had triumphed over a physical disability. For eight months, during 1848, he was in effect totally blind due to cataracts. They were successfully removed and his vision was restored. In 1853 his

wife succumbed. Nine children had been born to this marriage, but only three lived to maturity: Louisa Gobin, Jacob F. and Virginius Marius.

The oldest surviving son was Jacob F. Mayer who had been born in Germany in 1830. Sometime around mid-century he and his brother, Virginius, had learned their father's business and became associated with him. The shop and store was known as "G. A. Mayer's Sons." Jacob Mayer married twice. His first wife was Lucie Bond of Iowa. Three children were born to this union: Frederick V., Walter, and Harry. Jacob's wife died in 1853; it was a sorrowful year for the family as that was also the year his mother died. The following year he remarried, his bride being Mattie Woodruff. At least three sons (Frank, Herbert, and Maurice) were born to Jacob and Mattie although Jacob's obituary states that four children survived their father.

It is Jacob's brother, Virginius Marius Mayer, who is the important link in the Mayer and Geier family relationship. He was the father of Amanda Mayer, the first Mrs. Fred A. Geier. It is his first name, Virginius, that was chosen as the middle name for Fred A. Geier's oldest son and his oldest grandson.

It is believed that the classical names of Virginius and Marius were originally selected because George Adam and Margaretha Mayer's youngest son was born on the high sea during his mother's journey to America. The master of the ship was named Marius and the sailing vessel was the *Virginius*, or a variation of that name.

Louisa was the third of the three surviving children. She was born in Germany circa 1828 and had married French Gobin prior to the Civil War. French Gobin was described as an "influential and esteemed" citizen of Henderson, Kentucky. The Gobins had two children, but only their daughter, Maggie, appears to have lived to maturity. She married Joseph B. Johnston (George A. Mayer's stepson by his second marriage) and the couple had six children. Mrs. Gobin died 18 March 1874.

George A. Mayer's first wife, Margaretha, died in Henderson on 20 January 1853. The following year (20 December 1854) he married Elizabeth Worsham Johnston, the widow of Philip L. Johnston. Two children were born to this second union, but neither of them lived to maturity.

Elizabeth Worsham Johnston's husband had built the first sweet mash distillery in Henderson County. They had two sons: Eugene Ludson, born 18 February 1842, and Joseph B, born 26 September 1845.

Eugene Ludson Johnston was educated in Pennsylvania and Kentucky and at an early age entered the *Banner* office in Henderson to learn to be a typesetter. After the outbreak of the Civil War, he enlisted in the Confederate cause. He fought at the battle of Fort Donelson where he was taken prisoner and sent to Indianapolis. He soon escaped and walked to Madison, Indiana, where he acquired a skiff. He worked himself downriver past Louisville, Owensboro, and Henderson to Uniontown where he procured a horse and rode into Dixie.

His ride ended at Chattanooga, where he joined the Third Grand Division of the Confederate Army and was appointed acting ordnance sergeant. For six months his division was basically on the march and mainly observing the Union forces.

The calm ended on 30 December 1862 when the battle of Stone River (Tennessee) began. There were heavy casualties on both sides. On Friday 2 January 1863 Sergeant Johnston was killed. When he had first enlisted, Johnston carried with him a memorandum book in which he faithfully entered accounts of the activities of his command. His daily entries were said to be descriptive and well written. The diary closed with a line written under the heading of 2 January 1863. It read simply, "Poor boy!" Those were his last words.

Twenty years later the diary was returned to the family. A Union captain found the diary on the battlefield and later learned the address of Sergeant Johnston's brother, Joseph. Inside the cover of the diary was written:

> Found on the battlefield of Stone River, near Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Friday evening, January 2nd, 1863, by the subscriber and forwarded to J. B. Johnston July 26th, 1883, after a period of over twenty years between dates.
>
> R. C. Lane, Capt. Co. H. 40th, Ind(iana). Vet. Vol. Infantry. Paris, Illinois.

Since 29 April 1869 Joseph Johnston had been married to the former Margaret Gobin, the granddaughter of George A. Mayer. Joseph Johnston was active in several occupations. At various times he was a distiller, a clerk with G. A. Mayer's Sons, a partner in a drug business, and the founder of a spoke and handle factory. He gave up distilling when he was elected city clerk in Henderson. Six children were born to Joseph and Margaret Johnston.

It is not altogether clear how the Civil War impacted upon George A. Mayer and his sons, Jacob and Virginius. What is known is that the three Mayer men prospered during the 1860s. Guns and gunsmiths are in great demand during wartime.

The sympathies of most German-Americans were with the North during the Civil War. Free labor and the preservation of the Union were their causes. They did not enlist under the banner of slavery and states rights. George Mayer, despite being the stepfather of a Confederate hero, was probably allied in spirit with the majority of his Old World countrymen. And, it is known, that both Jacob F. and Virginius M. Mayer moved across the Ohio River to Evansville, Indiana, during the conflict. Jacob remained in Evansville until 1869.

It does not appear that Virginius Mayer remained in Indiana quite as long as his brother. On 29 October 1863, in Cincinnati, he married Charlotte Lotze, the daughter of a prominent and prosperous family. Charlotte was described as a lady of "high social and domestic character."

To Virginius and Charlotte Lotze Mayer were born three children: George Adolphus, Amanda Virginia, and Virginius Augustus. George A. Mayer, or "Dolf" as he was best known, was born in Evansville, Indiana, on 18 October 1864. He married Fred A. Geier's sister, Matilda, who died during childbirth in 1893. Their daughter, Matilda Elizabeth, succumbed of heart failure and typhoid on 16 January 1908. George A. Mayer was a director of The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company from 1891-1906 as well as its vice president for much of that period. His interests included the YMCA (on whose board he served), the Business Mens' Club, and lawn bowling.

After the turn of the century, George Mayer remarried. His bride was Eleanor Elizabeth Otten. The union of George A. and Eleanor Otten Mayer resulted in a son, Robert O. Mayer, and a daughter, Eleanor Elizabeth Mayer. Eleanor died of a heart attack on 29 December 1934 while visiting a girlhood friend in Chicago. She was 17. Robert Mayer and his wife, Margaret Rockel Mayer, were also the parents of one child, Kathleen Mayer, who was married to Philip Almand. They are the parents of four children: (1) Laura Elisabeth, born 29 March 1962, (2) Amy Heather Burson, born 7 March 1963, (3) Robert Hudson, born 8 March 1969, and (4) James Philip, born 6 November 1974. Kathleen is active in Episcopal Church matters in Cincinnati where she heads the altar guild at Christ Church Cathedral.

Virginius Augustus Mayer was born in Henderson, Kentucky, on 9 January 1870. He was educated in Cincinnati public schools and admitted to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He received a degree in electrical engineering from the eastern institution, completing a four-year course of study in three years. Later, he would hold several patents for his work in machinery.

He married Rose Marie Steele of Price Hill 8 July 1903, it was his second marriage, and three children were born of this union. The oldest daughter, Charlotte Virginia, died during February 1992 at San Pedro, California. Daughter Jean Marcia Miner, age 76, lives in Bellefontaine, Ohio, where she is retired. A son, Walter B. Mayer, died at age 21 in a motorcycle accident at Lawrenceburg, Indiana. He had been married less than a year when the accident occurred and he left no children.

The family of Virginius Augustus Mayer lived in Massachusetts for many years, but returned to live in Cincinnati at his mother's urging. The family vacationed at Indian Lake in west central Ohio, and this is the reason the family moved to nearby Bellefontaine when he retired. He died there on Christmas Day 1938. He is buried at Spring Grove Cemetery in Cincinnati.

Amanda Virginia Mayer was described as a "charming young lady." Fred A. Geier certainly thought so as he married his Ohio Avenue neighbor on 21 September 1892. Fred and Amanda were the parents of three children: Frederick Virginius, Helen Margaret, and Virginia Amanda. The children all lived long, productive, and purposeful lives.

Virginius Marius Mayer, whose birth had been aboard a sailing ship, died in Cincinnati on 8 April 1889. His wife, Charlotte Lotze Mayer, survived him by nearly a half-century. She died in the Queen City on 21 July 1933. She had been struck by an automobile after alighting from a street car. She was 91.

There were many changes in the aftermath of the war. In the late 1870s, Virginius Mayer withdrew from the family business and moved to Cincinnati where he was associated with his in-laws' furnace and heating business. It was about this time that George Mayer, on account of his advancing age, retired. The business continued to operate under the sole direction of Jacob Mayer as "George Mayer's Son."

After Jacob Mayer's return to Henderson in 1869, he was elected a member of the city school board, which had just been incorporated. In 1881, he was elected president of the board of the water works. He held this position until the time of his death in Henderson (of consumption) on 30 May 1890. His wife and four children survived him.

George A. Mayer outlived his two wives and all of his children. Of his later years it was written, "He is a great reader, loves his smoke and a glass of wine, and awaits the coming of his Maker with a spirit becoming a philosopher." During his final years he took great satisfaction from the fact that throughout his long business career he had never met a man who could truthfully say that George Mayer had defrauded him out of as much as a cent.

At his death, shortly before his 97th birthday, he was said to be older than anyone who had lived in the town of Henderson or in surrounding Henderson County. His funeral was impressive, yet modest as was characteristic of his life. Of his life and death the *Henderson Daily Record* recorded, "He had no enemies and there was as much sincere grief at his funeral services yesterday as was ever witnessed here." He was interred in the family plot at Fernwood Cemetery on 27 November 1894.

THE OTTEN FAMILY

Documentation for the Otten family has been established in the former Kingdom of Hanover in northern Germany from the early eighteenth century. The family name "Otten" was in a sense adopted. That story begins in 1793 in the small village of Riede which lies south of Bremen. In that year Friedrich Otten, age 53, was looking for a new inn keeper to run his establishment. Friedrich's business had been successful due to his industry and hard work. The establishment had been newly constructed in his father's lifetime but was enlarged with money Friedrich had earned during the Seven Years' War. He had gone 400 dollars in debt at the time but was able to quickly retire his indebtedness.

Friedrich was not so lucky, however, in the matter of who would inherit his estate. He had fathered three children but they were all stillborn. His search for a successor ended when he found a new inn keeper, the 24-year-old son of his brother Dietrich Boese.

Friedrich's heir was born Otto Boese (he would take the name Otten) on 10 September 1767. Shortly after Otto Otten had obtained his position he married Anne Dorothea Cohrsen. Their wedding was recorded on 12 September 1794. To Otto and Anne were born two sons: Otto Otten (12 September 1810) and Dietrich Otten (17 April 1814).

Anne may have died at the time of Dietrich's birth for we know that Otto Otten was a widower when he remarried on 31 May 1816. His bride was Anne Mette Bohmann, the only daughter of Johann Friedrich Bohmann from Riede. Two sons were born to the couple: Heinrich (23 April 1828) and Friedrich (10 August 1835).

It appears that the two oldest sons, Otto and Dietrich, left Riede to live in the nearby Free City of Bremen. Otto Otten was granted citizenship in the Free City of Bremen on 6 March 1839. While he received full political rights, his citizenship was without freedom of commerce.

Shortly after moving to Bremen, Otto married Louise Marianne Elisabeth Tangeman (Tangermann) from Sulingen, a city in the Kingdom of Hanover. Their nuptials took place at St. Peter's Cathedral in Bremen, a fourteenth century edifice. Louise was one of five Tangeman siblings known to have come to live in Cincinnati. Descendants of four of the five brothers and sisters would establish close relationships with the Geier family and The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company.

Otto Otten earned his living in Bremen as a "Kutscher." His work involved handling horses and freight wagons. "Kutscher" can be translated as a teamster or drayman. Four children were born in Bremen to Otto and Louise. They were: Johann Friedrich (John Frederick), Sophie Louise, Johanne Elisabeth (Betty), and Otto Otten, Jr.

It was Dietrich Otten who first crossed the Atlantic Ocean and, presumably, prepared the way for his siblings, parents, and assorted relatives who would follow. In 1851 Dietrich Otten sponsored the emigration of Otto and Louise Tangeman Otten to America. He was then a cigar manufacturer in Cincinnati. It is likely that Otto and Louise did not intend to take up permanent residency in the United States. Dietrich vouched to pay the City of Bremen two dollars and six groschen [a groschen is a ten-penny coin] a year to continue Otto's citizenship in Free City. That payment was to continue for five years.

Little is known about Dietrich. He appears in the Cincinnati *City Directory* in 1853. The only entry for a Dietrich Otten appeared a decade earlier, in 1843, when there is a listing for a laborer with that name who resided on Webster Street between Sycamore and Broadway. The name Dietrich Otten, not a very common one in America at the time, also surfaces during the mid-1840s in Savannah, Georgia. It is possible that Dietrich may have resided in the southern seaport for some time where he may have learned the tobacco business.

Otto and Louise Otten shared a long life in Cincinnati. They celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary in the Queen City in the company of their four children and friends. Louise Otten died of pneumonia in her 78th year on 13 October 1890. Otto, who worked in the tobacco and cigar trades in Cincinnati and Ironton, Ohio, succumbed on 6 March 1897. He was 86. Both Otto and Louise Otten are buried in the Geier family plot at Spring Grove Cemetery.

Otto's half-brother, Friedrich, came to America from Riede, Kingdom of Hanover. Different accounts give New Orleans (1851) and New York City (August 1854) as his port of entry to the United States. He married Maria Duer, a native of Bremen, at Zion German Evangelical Church in Cincinnati shortly after settling here.

Friedrich established a small cigar shop which, through his industry and talent, prospered for 30 years. He was a member of the German Pioneers and the Goethe Masonic Lodge. He succumbed on 29 April 1897 and is buried in the Otten family plot at Spring Grove Cemetery that he and his brother, Heinrich (Henry) Otten, had originally purchased. He was survived by his widow, Maria Duer, and three children: Olga Knockwiefel, Frederick Otten, Jr., and Otto T. Otten.

Little has been written about Henry. Like his half-brother, Otto, he married a Tangeman. His wife, Wilhelmina Tangeman, was the sister of Luisa Tangeman Otten, Fred A. Geier's maternal grandmother. Henry Otten probably emigrated from Germany at the same time as Otto as a Henry Otten is listed in the 1851-1852 Cincinnati *City Directory*. Like his brothers, he was a tobacconist and cigar maker. He is believed to have been a successful businessman for by 1870 his real estate was estimated at $15,000 and he had moved from 14th Street in Over-the-Rhine to Ohio Avenue.

At the time of the 1870 census, Henry and Wilhelmina Otten's children and their ages were: Otto (17), August (15), Theresa (5), Henry (4), and Eleanor Elizabeth (1). Fred A. Geier's children and grandchildren knew Theresa as "Aunt Daisy." Theresa made her home with her sister, Eleanor, and brother-in-law, George A. Mayer. A public school teacher, she was active in the Walnut Hills Lutheran Church where she taught Sunday School classes for many years. Before World War II, she acted numerous roles in performances given by the Terminal Theater Players.

Henry Otten died at age 49 on 15 August 1877 at his residence. He lived his last years at 317 West Fifth Street, five blocks west of Fountain Square.

Henry' daughter, Eleanor Elizabeth, is of greatest interest to those concerned with Geier family relationships. She became the second wife of George A. Mayer, Fred A. Geier's brother-in-law as well as the Mill's vice president. George Mayer's first wife, Matilda Geier (1867-1893), died during childbirth in 1893. Their only child, Matilda Elizabeth, did not live to maturity. She died of typhoid and heart failure in 1908. An account of George and Eleanor Mayer's descendants is found in the Mayer family biographical sketch.

It is the children of Otto and Louise Tangeman Otten who are of greatest importance to this family chronicle. John Frederick (2 November 1840-16 January

1900) was born in Bremen, came to America with his family, and served for over three years in the Civil War as a private. He served in Company G of the 63rd Ohio Infantry.

He lived in Ironton for a period of time but spent his later life in Cincinnati. He was a bookkeeper and, from 1888-1891, a company director at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company. On 27 September 1870 he was married to Mrs. Sophia A. Vogeding, a widow.

The second child born to Otto and Louise Otten was Sophia Louise. She was born in Bremen on 7 September 1842 and would with her husband Philip Geier be the parent of 10 children. She was the mother of Fred A. Geier who attributed much of his success to the lessons he learned from her life.

THE TANGEMANS

Few families have been linked to the Geier family over so many generations and at such important junctures in the family history as the Tangemans. Unfortunately, the sole Tangeman family history known to have been compiled in Cincinnati has disappeared and it is only possible to highlight some relevant episodes in this study.

The Tangeman family name was originally believed spelled "Tangermann." But even in its land of origin, Germany, it seems that some members of the same family included an "r" in their name while other members omitted the letter.

The earliest known Tangermann family chronicle relates that the family was descended from a monk who married a nun and left the Roman Catholic Church at the time of Martin Luther. The family name is derived from the Tanger River which flows into the Elbe River at Tangermunde (mouth of the Tanger) in the North German Plain. The old medieval town of Tangermuende, northwest of the city of Brandenburg, was in the spotlight in more recent history as the site American troops linked up with Russian forces near the end of World War II.

The Tangermanns are believed to have once owned the town as well as the smaller nearby community of Tangerhuette. Some members of the family were baronial. Elmer J. Tangerman, a one-time editor of *American Machinist*, heard that his grandfather had as a godfather the Elector of Hanover.

The account of the family skips ahead a few generations from the Reformation and some kilometers westward to the early nineteenth century Kingdom of Hanover. There Sophie Elisabeth Luehrs, the wife of a saddler, Johann Friedrich Tangeman, gave birth to a daughter. The child was christened Louise Marianne Elisabeth Tangeman. In 1812 the Tangemans were living in Sulingen, a town that should not be confused with the better known steel and cutlery city of Solingen.

Family relationships of interest to this narrative began on 28 April 1839 when the girl, then 27, married Otto Otten at St. Peter's Cathedral in Bremen. The previous month Louise Tangeman of Sulingen and Otto Otten of Riede had established citizenship in the Free City of Bremen. It is this couple, and their four children, who would emigrate from Bremen to Cincinnati in 1851. One of these children, Sophia Louise, would later be the mother of Fred A. Geier.

Louise Tangeman Otten is known to have had two brothers and two sisters who emigrated to Queen City. One of her brothers was Wilhelm Georg Tangeman, a cigar maker, whose son, Dr. Charles W. Tangeman, married Fred A. Geier's oldest sister, Anna, on 20 August 1884. Wilhelm Georg (believed to have been known also as Friedrich Wilhelm Georg) and his wife moved circa 1866 to the vicinity of Hayesville, Ashland County, in north-central Ohio where they farmed. In 1878 Wilhelm Georg traveled to Kansas to investigate a possible new home. He liked what he saw as he bought 80 acres in Harvey County outside of Newton, Kansas. Other Tangeman family members soon joined the westward migration to Kansas. His narrative is important as it helps explain that young Fred A. Geier's brief banking career in frontier Newton in the mid-1880s was not merely happenstance; family members had already settled there. Dr. Tangeman was the Geier family spokesman at the time of Philip Geier's untimely death in May 1887. He would also be the co-executor of his father-in-law's estate. The doctor was a widely known ear, nose, and throat specialist.

Dr. Charles and Anna Geier Tangeman were the parents of a son and a daughter. The son, Horace F. Tangeman, was born 2 April 1888. After graduating from Miami University and the Cincinnati Medical College, son Horace studied in Vienna for a year. Horace, who also elected to become an eye, nose and throat specialist, joined his father's practice as an associate.

Dr. Tangeman died of a heart attack on 11 October 1945 while attending a medical convention in Chicago. He was survived by his widow, Norma Rost Tangeman, who succumbed on 31 January 1970.

Dr. Tangeman was also survived by his sister, Margaret Louise (26 June 1895 - 31 January 1970). She was briefly married to Audley Brown, who was engaged in real estate, and they had one child, Michael T. Brown. Her second marriage was to George Barnes.

Michael T. Brown (22 September 1923 - 17 August 1991) would follow the footsteps of his grandfather and great grandfather into the medical profession. He was a graduate of Williams College and the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. He married Constance Saunders who in 1979 preceded him in death.

Dr. Michael Brown and his wife shared a special interest in Xavier University. They made a point of inviting out-of-town students to their home for holiday meals and ardently supported the Xavier athletic teams at home and away. In 1967 Dr. Brown was elected president of the Musketeer Club. He was also made an honorary member of the Xavier alumni association, which was quite a distinction for a University of Cincinnati graduate.

A second brother of Luise Tangeman Otten was George T. Tangeman (1 December 1822 - 28 December 1905). A cigar maker, George married Sophie Elizabeth Hellmers, a native of Switzerland, at Zion German Evangelical Church on 29 July 1853. To this union was born a son, Charles O, and a daughter, Bettie.

Charles O. Tangeman had legal training for he first worked in a Cincinnati law office. He soon transferred his talents to positions with a railroad. For 50 years he worked for the Big Four Railroad in various executive positions.

In the late nineteenth century Charles and his wife Hanhart lived in Fernbank, a community west of Cincinnati. He commuted by train to work in downtown Cincinnati. His religious affiliation was with the Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church where he was a member of the session for 33 years.

It was in Fernbank that a son, Walter William, was born on 16 September 1891. As Walter matured he grew tall, well over six feet by the time he played varsity basketball for the University of Cincinnati.

Walter Tangeman started what would be a life-long career with the Mill in 1908 as a co-op drill press hand. Upon graduation, in 1913 he commenced working full-time. His rise was rapid as he quickly mastered manufacturing and sales assignments.

By 1927 Walter was elected a company director. Among his major Mill titles were those of vice president in charge of sales (1930), executive vice president (1939), and chairman of the board (1956). For years, his influence at The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company was second only to that of the company president, Frederick V. Geier, who was his third cousin.

While Walter Tangeman's career was exclusively at the Mill, his outside interests were varied. He served as senior warden at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Hyde Park. He also contributed his talents to the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce (where he was president for two terms), to the second Hoover Commission on government reorganization, and to the University of Cincinnati Research Foundation.

Married to Margaret Core on 18 September 1920, he and his wife were parents of two children. Son Donald, born 4 July 1921, served as a lieutenant j.g. in the U.S. Navy and was killed in action on a PT boat in the South Pacific during April 1945. As a PT boat captain and squadron leader, he had completed 77 night patrols in enemy waters when he received a furlough. However, he remained on duty because his replacement was not at hand. In his last patrol, he died trying to save his boat and crew. The Donald Core Tangeman Campus Union at the University of Cincinnati is dedicated in his honor.

Walter and Margaret Tangeman's daughter, Margaret Ellen Murphy, lives in Lutz, Florida. She and her first husband, Halbert Emerson Payne, were the parents of four children: Oliver E., Elizabeth A., Walter R., and Donald E.

Walter Tangeman had an older brother, Charles L. Tangeman (1885-1949), who had a Mill connection. Charles was a graduate of Purdue University and worked for the Westinghouse Electric Corporation in Dayton before coming to The Cincinnati Milling Machine Company in 1929. He was an electrical engineer. His affiliations included Knox Presbyterian Church and the Engineering Society of Cincinnati.

Charles was also outlived by his widow, Mina Hoefle Tangeman, and two sons, John Louis and James H. Tangeman. Charles was also survived by two sisters: Elsie and Helen Tangeman. Elsie Tangeman was a high school history teacher in the Cincinnati public school system for many years and a graduate of the University of Cincinnati. Helen Tangeman, who retired as supervisor of English for Cincinnati public high schools, was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Cincinnati. Both sisters were affiliated with the Cincinnati Women's Club, the College Club of Cincinnati, Delta Delta Delta sorority, and Knox Presbyterian Church.

The youngest sister of Louise Tangeman Otten was Wilhelmina Tangeman (1830-1915). Wilhelmina married Heinrich Otten, the half-brother of Louise's husband. The account of the descendants of this union is included in the Otten and Mayer family biographical sketches.

The fourth verified sibling of Louise Tangeman Otten was her sister, Maria Tangeman (5 April 1826-24 February 1903). Maria married Henry M. Moorman, who was associated with her brother, Wilhelm, in a cigar and tobacco store at 617 Main Street at the time of the Civil War.Their granddaughter, Stella Moorman, married Harry Rogers Drackett of Cleveland on 17 September 1908.

The Dracketts became a prominent Queen City family. Beginning in the early 1900s, the Dracketts were engaged in the production of various chemicals. The Drackett enterprise was soon established as a major producer of pharmaceutical grade Epson salts.

Consumer products developed or acquired by Drackett over the years became household words. Such items as Drano, Windex, Vanish bowl cleaner, and the O'Cedar line of brooms, sponge mops, and furniture brought profits and recognition to the company.

In 1965, the Drackett company was acquired by Bristol-Myers and Roger Drackett retired. Thus ended 60 years of family management in a company that was headed by Marie Tangeman Moorman's great grandson. In 1992, S. C. Johnson of Racine, Wisconsin, purchased the company and the Drackett company name itself faded into history.

THE TUECHTERS

A close association between the Geiers and Tuechters lasted through two generations. For this period there was no family branch that so closely mirrored the Geiers. The relationship commenced on 15 February 1864 when Louisa Geier, the sister of Fred A. Geier's father, Philip, married William R. Tuechter at Zion German Evangelical Church in Over-the-Rhine.

William R. Tuechter, a native of Prussia, was born 18 December 1837 and came to Cincinnati in 1855. He learned the cooper's trade (barrel making) with George H. Streitmann who would in succeeding years use barrels to ship the crackers and cookies he baked. Tuechter later became a bookkeeper and was associated with the banker C. F. Adae. In 1878, he became bookkeeper for the German National Bank where he remained until succumbing to tuberculosis on 2 May 1889.

William and Louisa had six children: August Heinrich Tuechter (15 August 1869-17 May 1947), Louise Tuechter Dornette (1 June 1871-12 August 1938), Wilhelmina Cornelia (Nellie) Tuechter Bohlender (20 October 1873-18 September 1954), William P. Tuechter (9 January 1876-13 October 1918), Anna Tuechter Heckel (19 April 1878-29 February 1976), and Jacob L. Tuechter (5 September 1881-24 June 1966). The three sons, cousins to Fred A. Geier, would later develop business and professional connections with the Geiers.

The closest relationship was with August H. Tuechter, who was commonly known as "Gus." He collaborated closely with Fred A. Geier in machine tool and metal trades initiatives. Like Fred, August attended Woodward High School where he graduated in 1884. He then enrolled, for six months, in night classes at Nelson Business College. August Tuechter at first followed his father's footsteps by working as a bookkeeper. He first found employment at the (Charles H.) Hoefinghoff and Laue Foundry. He then went to the Bickford Drill Company where he soon became a partner. In 1899 he disposed of his interest in Bickford and with Sherman C. Schauer organized the Cincinnati Machine Tool Company to manufacture upright drills. In 1909 the Cincinnati Machine Tool Company bought out the Bickford Company, the firm name had been changed to the Bickford Drill & Tool Company when Tuechter had left a decade earlier. The business was now reorganized as the Cincinnati Bickford Tool Company, Inc. with August Tuechter as its president, the office he still held at his death in 1947.

Fred A. Geier brought August Tuechter aboard The Cincinnati Milling Machine Board in 1891 and he remained a director until 1905. Tuechter's Cincinnati Bickford was one of the original plants in the Oakley Factory Colony even though Gus thought his cousin Fred had "taken leave of his senses" in undertaking such a big and questionable venture. In time the Cincinnati Bickford plant would become the largest and most modern shop in the world devoted exclusively to building upright and radial drills. In 1960 the Mill bought the Bickford facilities from Giddings & Lewis. The Bickford plant is known today as Plant Number 3.

A life-long bachelor, (it was said he promised his father on his death-bed that he would not marry in order to take care of his mother) August Tuechter's passion was music. His appointment as Zion Evangelical Church's organist and choir master began 10 February 1892 and he served continuously in that capacity until the church closed its doors in 1934. When the fortieth anniversary of his appointment occurred he received many letters of congratulations. The senders included Cincinnati Mayor

Russell Wilson, Ohio Governor George White, and President Herbert Hoover. Tuechter also sang in May Festivals under Theodore Thomas.

August Tuechter was one of the organizers of the National Machine Tool Builders' Association and held office in it for nine years, including terms as president and treasurer. He was noted for his interest in company welfare work. This was another characteristic he shared with his Geier cousins, most notably Fred A. and Dr. Otto P. Geier. It was his habit to spend Saturday afternoons visiting sick and disabled employees.

In addition to his service to Zion Evangelical Church, where he was also president of the church council, he was devoted to the General (originally German) Protestant Orphans Home where he was a director for the last 18 years of his life. For many years he served as secretary of the board of directors of the Bethesda Home for the Aged and was an active member of the Bethesda Hospital and Deaconess Association. He was also a trustee of Deaconess Hospital (the name German Deaconess Hospital was dropped in 1918) where, in 1925, he chaired a campaign that raised $500,000 for a new wing, administrative offices, and renovations to the existing building. To his wide circle of comrades there he was familiarly known as "*Onkle* Gus."

William Philip Tuechter, the second of the three Tuechter sons, died on 13 October 1918 at age 42. He was a victim of the Spanish influenza epidemic that was at the time ravaging much of the nation and the world. Fraternally, William Tuechter was a prominent Mason and an Elk. He had organized and was president of the Century Machine Company in Oakley which made baking machinery. After prohibition closed the Esselborn family brewery in Portsmouth, Ohio, Paul Esselborn became president of the company. Paul returned to Cincinnati to live in 1918, perhaps as a consequence of William P. Tuechter's death. William Tuechter was survived by his wife Emily.

The youngest of the Tuechter sons, Jacob L. Tuechter, would outlive his brothers. He was 86 when he succumbed in 1966. He was a graduate of Woodward High School, the University of Cincinnati, and the Ohio Medical College which his cousin Otto Geier had also attended. He also studied at the University of Vienna. Dr. Tuechter was the physician of Juliet Esselborn Geier and most likely attended various other family members as well. He was highly regarded by his peers and was president of the Daniel Drake Medical Society. He was survived by a daughter, Mrs. John W. Hauser, three grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

Dr. Tuechter may have been guided into health care by his father's brother, Henry W. Tuechter. After Henry Tuechter's death (he died 25 October 1916) an obituary published by the German Deaconess Hospital noted that Henry W. Tuechter "lived for others." He had been connected with the hospital for 28 years, much of the time as its superintendent and financial secretary. He held the latter office at the time of his death. However, as early as 1893 he was the hospital's superintendent. At that time Fred A. Geier's mother headed the hospital's Ladies Aid Association and Fred, himself, was starting out in philanthropic endeavors as the hospital's second financial secretary. Fred A. Geier, his brother Walter, and his mother were all life members of the Deaconess Hospital Association.

Henry W. Tuechter's life of service also found expression in religious work. He was a director, and for 40 years was a member of the Hamilton County Sunday School Association. He was a devoted member of the First German Reformed Church at Freeman and Hulburt in the West End. He had been active in its Sunday School for

60 years and its superintendent for 30 years. He had served on the church's governing council for 40 years.

Survived only by his wife Louisa (nee von Behren), his funeral service filled every seat in the large church where he had lovingly labored nearly his entire life.

Daughter Louise Tuechter married Henry F. Dornette who became chairman of the board of the Triumph Manufacturing Company. The company made baking machinery at their Spring Grove Avenue plant. Henry was a trustee of the Bethesda Hospital and Deaconess Association and a 32nd degree Mason. Henry and Louise were the parents of Helen Dornette, who is retired from teaching science at Withrow High School.

Daughter Wilhelmina Cornelia was more simply and commonly known as "Nellie." She was married to Ernest Bohlender who, in 1895, founded Bohlender Engraving Company. In 1976 a *Cincinnati Enquirer* article noted that this was the only Cincinnati engraving company to gain national recognition for its work. Nellie inherited the family's love of music. She was a patron of Delta Omicron, a music honorary. One daughter, Ruth (1899-1923), was born to the Bohlenders. She was an accomplished singer who died on 27 April, just weeks before her scheduled debut as a soprano soloist at the May Festival.

Anna married Edward W. Heckel, who was secretary of the Triumph Manufacturing Company at the time of his retirement. He served on the village council of Madisonville before the community was annexed to Cincinnati. Edward and Anna were the parents of two sons, Paul E. and Robert. Paul Heckel is, in many ways, the present-day historian of the Tuechter family and of the several institutions and concerns with which they were so closely associated.

Louisa Geier Tuechter was the only one of Friedrich and Louisa Rheinberger Geier's seven children to live into old age. When she died on 31 May 1938 at age 94 she was, indeed, the matriarch of the family. She had survived her husband, William R. Tuechter, by nearly a half-century.

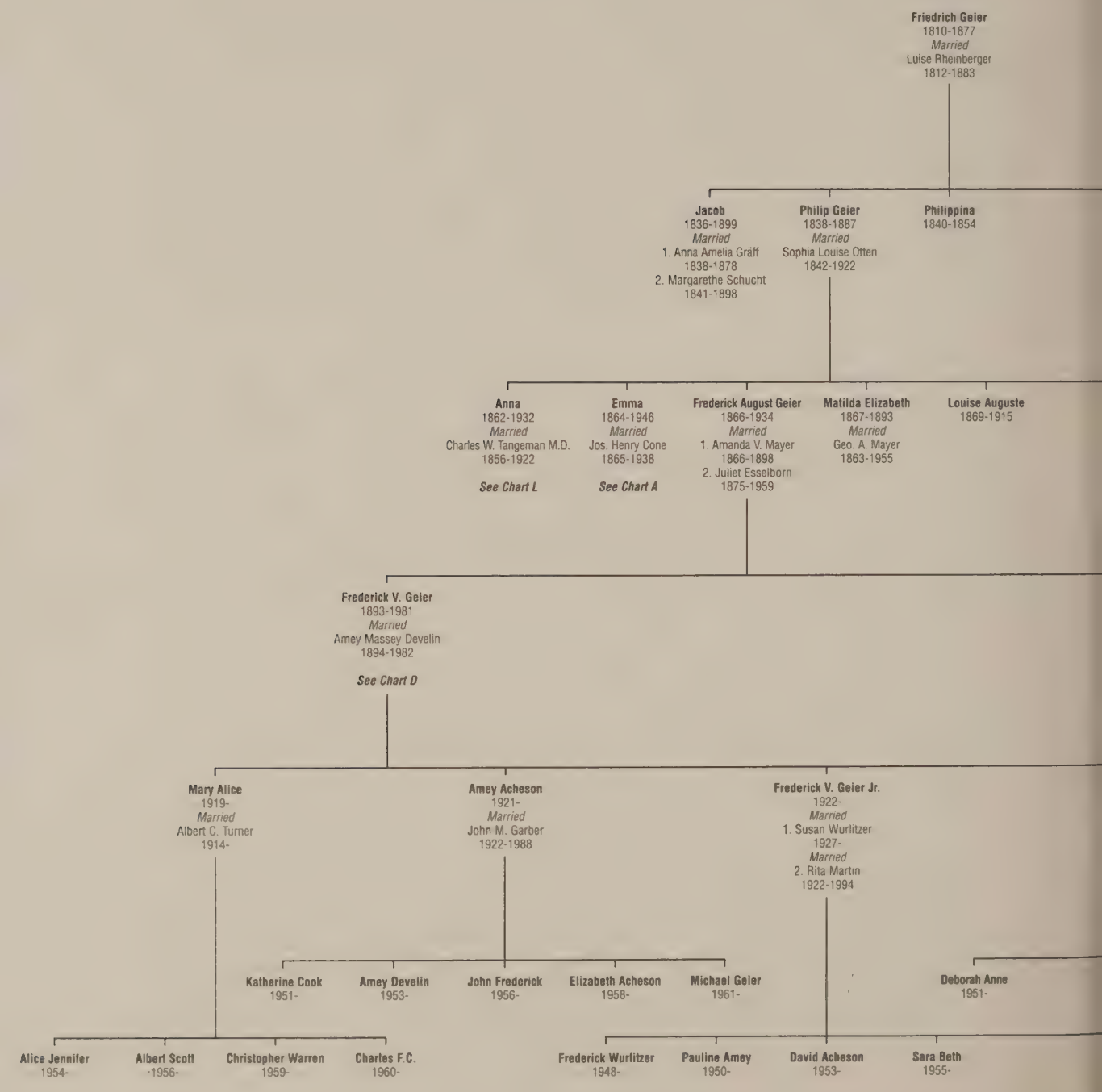
She was born in the Bavarian Rhineland village of Weilerbach in 1844 and as a child had sailed with her family from Le Havre, France, to New Orleans. The crossing took 70 days, she would often recall in later years.

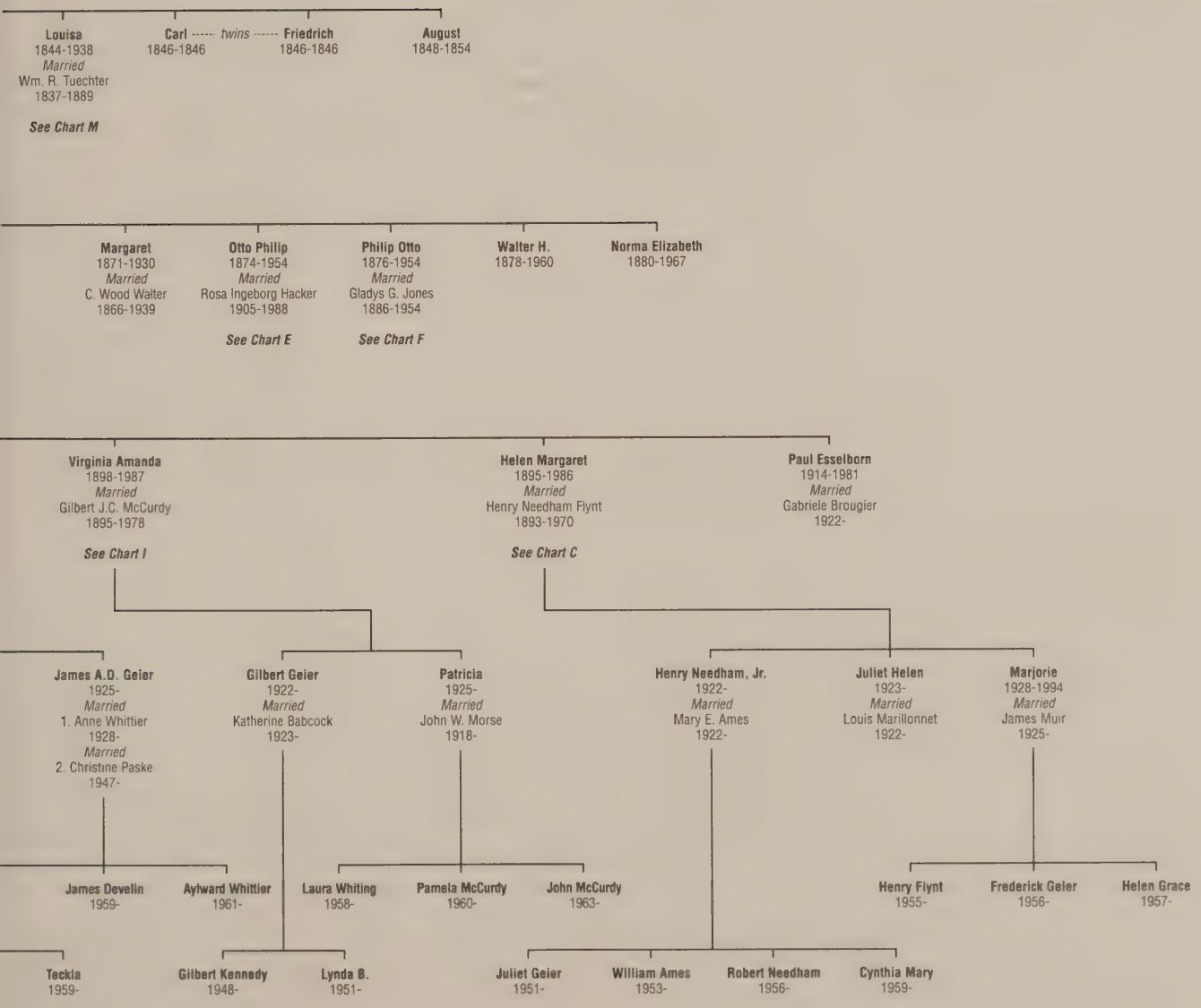
Louisa was devoted to Zion Evangelical Church which she attended for 83 years when the church closed in September 1934. She and her son, August, with whom she lived for 60 years, were the last to leave after the church's last service. It was at Zion that she was married and her six children had been baptized. Of the many family members who had been members of the congregation, only she and her son, the president of the church council, remained at the end.

There was a major difference between Louisa Geier Tuechter and her brother, Philip Geier, and between the oldest sons of both families. Both the Geiers and Tuechters did prosper, although it took the Tuechters longer to acquire wealth. Perhaps because of earlier financial hardship, August Tuechter and his mother exhibited amazing personal frugality. Readers of a *Cincinnati Times-Star* article on 14 August 1947 were surprised to learn that August Tuechter's estate was appraised at $4,030,669 while his household furnishings were valued at only $202.

Genealogical Charts

Family of Friedrich and Luise Rheinberger Geier




Louisa
1844-1938
Married
Wm. R. Tuechter
1837-1889
See Chart M
Carl ----- twins ----- Friedrich
1846-1846 1846-1846
August
1848-1854
Margaret
1871-1930
Married
C. Wood Walter
1866-1939
Otto Philip
1874-1954
Married
Rosa Ingeborg Hacker
1905-1988
See Chart E
Philip Otto
1876-1954
Married
Gladys G. Jones
1886-1954
See Chart F
Walter H.
1878-1960
Norma Elizabeth
1880-1967
Virginia Amanda
1898-1987
Married
Gilbert J.C. McCurdy
1895-1978
See Chart I
Helen Margaret
1895-1986
Married
Henry Needham Flynt
1893-1970
See Chart C
Paul Esselborn
1914-1981
Married
Gabriele Brougier
1922-
James A.D. Geier
1925-
Married
1. Anne Whittier
1928-
Married
2. Christine Paske
1947-
Gilbert Geier
1922-
Married
Katherine Babcock
1923-
Patricia
1925-
Married
John W. Morse
1918-
Henry Needham, Jr.
1922-
Married
Mary E. Ames
1922-
Juliet Helen
1923-
Married
Louis Marillonnet
1922-
Marjorie
1928-1994
Married
James Muir
1925-
James Develin
1959-
Aylward Whittier
1961-
Laura Whiting
1958-
Pamela McCurdy
1960-
John McCurdy
1963-
Henry Flynt
1955-
Frederick Geier
1956-
Helen Grace
1957-
Teckla
1959-
Gilbert Kennedy
1948-
Lynda B.
1951-
Juliet Geier
1951-
William Ames
1953-
Robert Needham
1956-
Cynthia Mary
1959-

Family of Joseph Henry and Emma Geier Cone

Philip H. 1895-1967
M. September 1938
Margaret Keyes Madden 1896-1971

- **Henry "Sam"** (stepson of Philip) 1923-
  M. 9 August 1947
  Mary Turpin Gerard 1924-
  - **Stephen Keyes** 1948-
    M. 15 August 1970
    Beverly Dumford 1950-
    M. 25 June 1988
    Sarah Watson 1957-
  - **Mary Gerard** 1951-
    M. 28 May 1977
    Shelly Mendor 1953-
  - **Marguerite Keyes** 1953-
    M. 8 April 1978
    Thomas T. Procter 1954-
- **Frank** (stepson of Philip) 1927-1976
  M. 2 March 1951
  Katherine O'Keefe 1928-
  - **Philip Kevin** 1954-
    M. 29 September 1984
    Anne Lilly 1960-
  - **Christopher Keyes** 1958-
    M. 1 August 1987
    Lois Metz 1952-
  - **Kathleen Candace "Candy"** 1956-
    M. 7 April 1979
    Kevin McNamara 1953-

Dorothy Elizabeth 1897-1983
M. 23 October 1920
Albert Miller Storrs 1894-1968

- **Albert Miller Jr. M.D.** 1921-
  M. 6 December 1946
  Lila Isabella Acton 1921-
  - **Ann Aylett** 1948-
    M. 31 May 1975
    Frank Butts Watkins 1952-
  - **Albert Miller III** 1949-
    M. 3 June 1978
    Linda Beth Rauck 1954-
  - **Kathryn Cone** 1952-
    M. 29 September 1979
    Samuel Faulkner Miles 1944-
  - John Acton 1955-
    M. 4 August 1984
    Elaine Renee Banks 1960-
- **Philip** 1924-
  M. 22 May 1948
  Cynthia Crutcher 1923-
  - **Philip Seth** 1954-1981
  - **William Crutcher** 1956-
    M. 4 February 1989
    Amy Zahradnik 1958-

Family of Henry L. and Harriet L. Crane

a H. 1865-1946
M. 1919
ara V. Spillard 1874-1955

William Henry, M.D. 1869-1906
M. 1902
milie Esselborn 1872-1957

- **Paul Willard** 1903-1992
  M. 3 October 1931
  Verona Harman 1906-
  - **William Jasper** 1934-
  - **Bradford Harman** 1936-
    M. 26 August 1972
    Anabel Burgh 1936-
  - **George Stephen** 1941-
    M. February 1986
    Marry Harris 1951-
  - **Robert Louis** 1945-

Robert Lupton 1872-1940
M. 1902
Carol Matthews N/A

- **Robert** 1907-
  M.
  Edith N/A

Helen 1871-1953

Walter Neave 1873-N/A
M. 20 September 1909
Alice Richardson N/A

- **William** 1911-
  M. 26 November 1933
  Mildred Highsmith N/A
- **Harriet** N/A
  M. 16 May 1934
  Francis Finley N/A
  - **Franklin** 1935-
  - **John** 1939-
  - **David** N/A
  - **Robert** N/A

Edith 1874-1963

Family of Henry Needham and Helen Geier Flynt

Henry Needham Jr. 1922-
M. 12 August 1950
Mary Elizabeth Ames 1922-

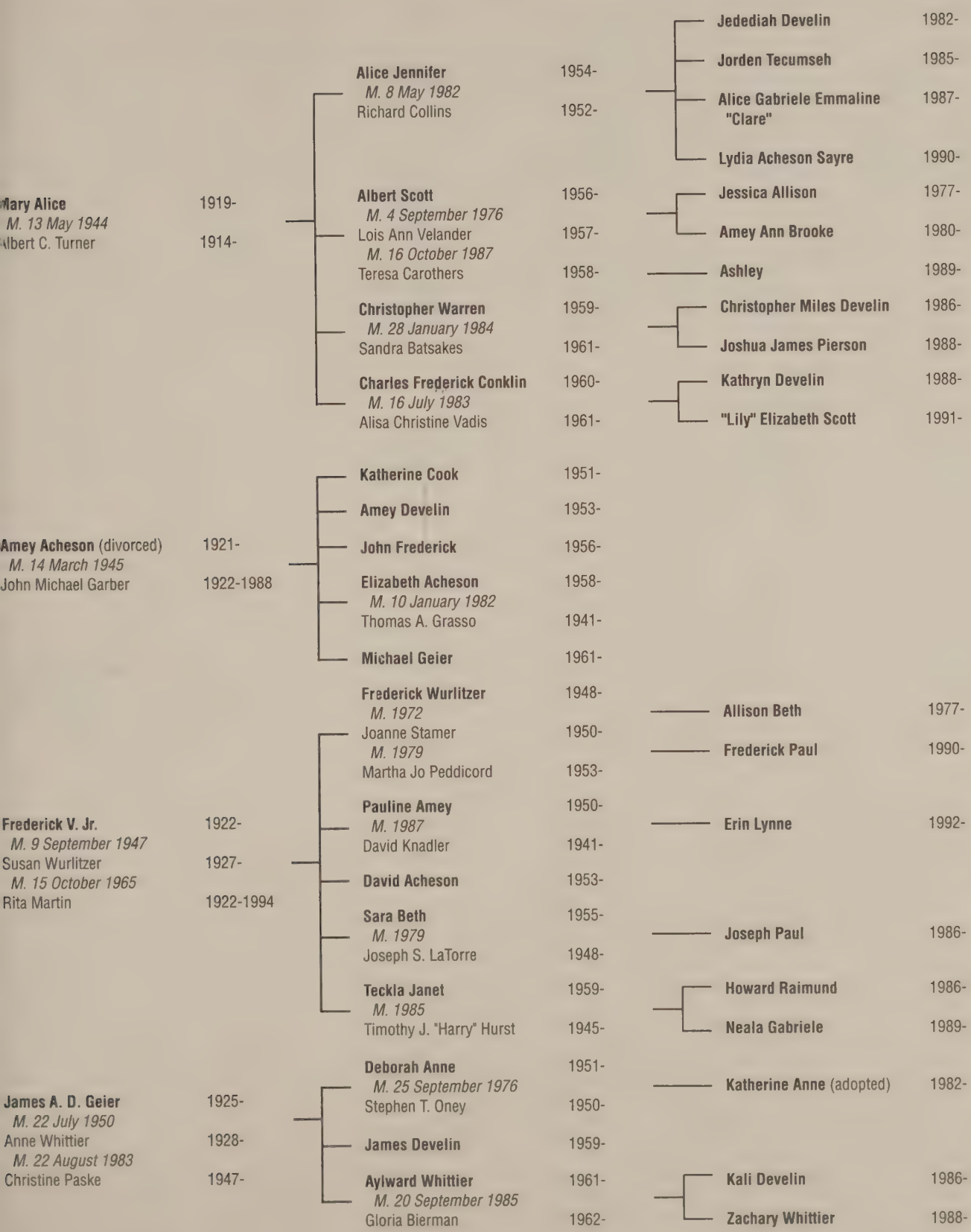
- **Juliet Geier** 1951-
- **William Ames** 1953-
  M. 15 September 1979
  Suzanne Lasher 1954-
  - **Molly Clark** 1986-
  - **Emma Lasher** 1994-
- **Robert Needham** 1956-
- **Cynthia Mary** 1959-
  M. 7 July 1990
  David Kriegel 1956-
  - **Sohpia Flynt** 1993-

Juliet Helen 1923-
M. 20 September 1952
Louis Marillonnet 1922-

Marjorie 1928-1994
M. 30 September 1949
James Muir 1925-

- **Henry Flynt** 1955-
- **Frederick Geier** 1956-
  M. 17 November 1990
  Kathleen L. Massucco 1954-
- **Helen Grace** 1957-

Family of Frederick V. and Amey Massey Develin Geier



Family of Otto Philip and Rosa Ingeborg Geier

Otto P. Jr. 1927-
M. 20 August 1955
Elspeth Mary Taylor 1930-

- **Pamela** 1957-
  M. 23 October 1987
  Scott Charles O'Hara 1961-
  - **Lindsay** 1989-
  - **Heather** 1992-
- **Elspeth Taylor** 1960-
  M. 20 June 1987
  Gary Lloyd England 1958-
  - **Madeline** 1992-
- **Paul Alexander** 1963-
- **Roger Philip** 1964-
- **Hugh** 1967-

Family of Philip Otto and Gladys G. Jones Geier

Family of Adolphus and Magdalena Bering Lotze

August Anton 1841-1844

Charlotte Regina 1842-1933
M. 29 October 1863
Virginius Marius Mayer 1832-1889

(for descendants see following chart)

Mary Anna 1843-1928
M. 1 September 1874
Maximilian Baader
(family moved to Mittenwald, Bavaria where line continues)

Fritz 1900-

Adolf Sr. 1875-1952
M.
Katherine Stadlmayr 1875-1963

Adolf Jr. 1902-1965
M.
Eleonore Neuner 1908-1983

Albert Walter 1869-1910
M.
Elsa Louise Rothengatter 1873-1945

Marvin Emil 1893-1953
M. 2 February 1928
Belinda Charlotte Kirkosky 1899-1992

Carl A. 1870-1946
M.
Irma Spicker N/A

Marie 1894-1947
M. 1 September 1917
John K. Grisard, Lt., 1892-1918

Herbert 1877-1918

Vera 1909-
M. 11 June 1929
Richard Van Vyven 1909-

Rosina Elisa 1845-1928
M. 1867
Clements A. Nulsen 1845-1894

Eric 1873-1962
M.
Hulda Mueller 1875-1980

M.
William P. Bennett 1905-1972
M.
Howard Plue N/A

Nulsen 1907-
M. 22 October 1932
Eleanor Elizabeth Brown 1911-

Alma 1875-1960
M. 1 October 1900
Carl Widmann 1876-1958

Rosemary 1905-1992
M.
Wayne Fitzgerald 1907-1965

Irma 1883-N/A
M.
Herb Steves 1882-1947

Mary Louise 1912-
M. 1945
Ellwood Smith N/A

Adolphus Wilhelm Jr. 1847-N/A

August H. 1848-1909

Christian Matthew Lotze 1850-1932
M.
Emma Magdalena Lotze 1851-1910

Edmund William 1877-1928

Erna Magdalena 1880-1972

Louise M. Lotze 1852-1940

Frieda 1883-1970

Julias Lang (died as infant)

Frederick Bauer 1853-1940
M.
Josephine Lang 1856-1924

Gertrude Lang (died as infant)

Helena 1885-1979
M.
William J. White 1886-1969

Agnes 1889-1976

Amanda J. 1859-1962
M. 11 December 1894
Adolph Seinecke 1855-N/A
M. 6 January 1898
Eugene Fusshippel N/A

Elspeth Seinecke 1885-1978
M.
Willis Gibson 1869-1950

Martha 1899-1988

Family of Virginius Marius and Charlotte Lotze Mayer

George Adolphus 1864-1955
M. 8 June 1892
Matilda E. Geier 1867-1893
M. 14 December 1904
Eleanor Otten 1869-1945

- **Matilda Elizabeth** 1893-1908
- **Eleanor E. Mayer** 1917-1934
- **Robert O. Mayer** 1909-1994
  M. 25 May 1935
  Margaret Rockel 1911-
  - **Kathleen** 1941-
    M. 25 March 1961 (divorced)
    Philip Almand 1937-

Amanda Virginia 1866-1898
M. 21 September 1892
**for descendants, see Geier Family Tree*
Frederick A. Geier 1866-1934

Virginius Augustus Mayer 1870-1938
M. 8 July 1903
Rose Marie Steele 1881-1941

- **Charlotte Virginia** 1911-1992
  M. 17 January 1948
  Robert Adkins 1915-1948
  M. 20 September 1949
  Thomas Modena 1918-1980
- **Jean Marcia** 1917-
  M. 29 March 1942
  Phillip D. Miner 1918-1985
  - **Nikki A.** 1944-
    M. 19 November 1963
    Jack E. Smith 1942-
  - **Walter** 1942-
    M. 3 November 1979
    Ruth Swartzendruber 1958-
  - **Marcia Jean** 1947-
- **Walter V** 1919-1941
  M. 3 February 1940
  Irene Muzleski 1921-

Family of Gilbert J. C. and Virginia Geier McCurdy

Gilbert 1922-
M. 9 November 1946
Katherine Babcock 1923-

- **Gilbert Kennedy** 1948-
  M. 24 March 1979
  Irene Catherine Reeves 1951-
  - **Kathenne Virginia Aab** 1987-
    (adopted)
- **Lynda B.** 1951-
  M. 9 August 1975
  Peter J. Hotra 1947-
  - **Elizabeth Babcock** 1980-
  - **Caroline McCurdy Sullivan** 1983-

Patricia 1925-
M. 22 June 1957
John W. Morse 1918-

- **Laura Whiting** 1958-
  M. 11 August 1990
  George G. Hayden 1956-
  - **Robert Morse** 1991-
  - **Julia Healey** 1994-
- **Pamela McCurdy** 1960-
  M. 29 June 1985
  Scott D. Stewart 1958-
  - **John William** 1988-
  - **Christopher Morse** 1990-
  - **Katherine Elizabeth** 1994-
    (twins)
  - **Anne McCurdy** 1994-
- **John McCurdy** 1963-
  M. 13 November 1993
  Erinne L. Conkin

Family of Otto and Louise Marianne Elizabeth Tangeman Otten

ohann Friedrich 1840-1900
M. 27 September 1870
ophia Vogeding 1839-1916

——— **Betty** 1875-1879

ophia Louise 1842-1922
M. 8 September 1861
**Ten children, see Geier Family Tree*
hilip Geier 1838-1887

Johanne Elisabeth "Betty" 1842-1930
M. 4 October 1866
Heinrich W. Ahlers 1829-1895

Otto N. 1848-1949
M. 2 December 1875
Elizabeth Tyler 1855-1920

——— **Norma Lilian** 1879-1967
M. 9 October 1900
Harry Maurice Paul 1873-1952

——— **Harold Paul** 1902-
M.
Betty Mitchell N/A

Family of Charles O. and Emma Hanhart Tangeman

Marie Sophie 1883-1884

Charles Louis 1885-1949
M. 24 October 1914
Mina Hoefle 1883-1961

- **John Louis** 1916-1977
  M. 22 December 1956
  Gerd Vaagen 1925-
  - **John C., M.D.** 1957-
    M. 12 July 1981
    Gail Koenig 1957-
  - **Thomas A.** 1959-1963
- **James H.** 1919-1991
  M. 17 September 1943
  Mary Ellen Robinson 1922-1970
  - **Donna L.** 1947-1990
    M. April 1972
    Stephen D. West N/A
  - **James Jr.** 1953-

Elsie 1887-1975

Walter William 1891-1966
M. 18 September 1920
Margaret "Marjorie" Core 1891-1986

- **Donald Core** 1921-1945
- **Margaret Ellen** N/A
  M. 15 September 1951
  Halbert Emerson Payne N/A
  M.
  James Murphy N/A
  - **Oliver E.** N/A
  - **Elizabeth A.** N/A
  - **Walter R.** N/A
  - **Donald E.** N/A

Helen 1895-1982

Chart K

Family of Friedrich Wilhelm and Margaretha Schiedt Tangeman

Charles W., M.D. 1856-1922
M. 20 August 1884
Anna Geier 1862-1932

- **Horace, M.D.** 1888-1945
  M. 22 November 1919
  Norma Rost 1895-1970
- **Margaret Louise** 1895-1970
  M. 21 November 1922
  Audley Brown 1888-1979
  M.
  George Barnes 1881-1958
  - **Michael, M.D.** 1923-1991
    M. 28 April 1956
    Constantine Saunders 1933-1979

Family of William R. and Louisa Geier Tuechter

ugust Herman 1869-1947

ouise "Lou" 1871-1938
M. 23 December 1903
lenry Frederick Dornette 1880-1969

— **Helen Grace Dornette** 1907-

Cornelia Wilhelmina "Nellie" 1873-1954
M. 31 August 1898
rnest Bohlender 1865-1935

— **Ruth** 1899-1923

William Philip 1876-1918
M. 27 November 1907
Emily Brophil 1885-1964

Anna Josephine 1878-1976
M. 15 December 1904
Edward W. Heckel 1869-1948

Paul Edward 1907-
M. 30 June 1939
Ruth Evans 1906-

Evan Edward 1941-
M. 2 June 1964
Virginia Metcalf 1941-

Gayle Ann 1945-
M. 6 July 1968
James H. White Jr., Col. 1945-

Robert Louis 1914-
M. 19 February 1955
Anne Bradley Pitt 1912-

Jacob Louis, M.D. 1881-1966
M. 16 April 1912
Emily Wagner 1888-1965

Margaret Louise 1913-1969
M. 3 June 1936
John Wesley Hauser, M.D. 1913-1991

Judith Anne 1939-
M. 2 September 1961
James Ralph Adams Esq. 1938-

Mary Emily 1941-
M. 9 October 1965
Robert Edward King 1935-

David Wesley 1946-
M. 21 December 1968
Margaret Elizabeth Gibson 1946-

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